





More money  
and better  
organization  
will help,  
but what the  
Democrats  
really need are  
new ideas



# Can This Party Be Saved?



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## That Man from Rio

Brazil's most famous labor leader  
goes on trial



# THE INSIDE STORY



## Facts of life in a post-market age

By David Moberg

The top priority for the new Reaganite custodians of the national good is to get the country's economy moving again. Their "populist" promise is to put everyone back to work by unleashing the forces of unrestrained greed in the good old free market.

One of their problems is that they are living in an ideological dream world. Their pamphleteering theories bear little relation to "the way the world works" (to crib a title from one right-wing "supply-side" economist). We have moved into a post-market global economy, increasingly dominated by multinational corporations—including many springing forth from newly industrializing centers. Concentration of economic power has increased, creating a dual economy of corporate giants and millions of tiny enterprises (70 percent of all private economic activity in the U.S., for example, is controlled by only 800 multinational conglomerates). Whether Jesse Helms likes it or not, governments everywhere are more and more deeply involved in economic matters, ranging from negotiation of trade deals, provision of subsidies or regulation of corporate activities to outright ownership of vast enterprises. Reagan may try to turn back the tide here, but the rest of the world is marching in the opposite direction.

This is the picture that international economist Ronald Muller paints in *Revitalizing America: Politics for Prosperity* (Simon and Schuster), a revealing and stimulating look at the problems of revitalizing the domestic and world economy and an assessment of various policy strategies. Although Muller's own prescriptions are not always completely satisfactory, he makes it clear why the Reagan approach not only will not improve matters but will make our economic problems even worse.

The economic order that persisted in the capitalist world for decades after the end of World War II has been transformed, Muller writes. In addition to the greater concentration and growth of multinationals (which control 70 percent of world trade), the U.S. has lost its role as leader and controlling influence. No replacement is in sight, as economic and political power has become diffused. Resource scarcities have been accentuated. "Third World" pressure on the developed countries has grown even as that camp has split in two—the desperately poor on the one side and the newly industrializing countries and oil-rich states on the other.

Within the United States, the postwar changes have undermined traditional government economic policies, whether they are "fiscalist" Keynesian or "monetar-

ist," both of which, Muller argues, are concerned with diffuse regulation of demand to control inflation or business cycles. But this is a post-market domestic as well as international economy. Muller argues that Keynesianism requires (1) a political consensus (but that has vanished), (2) government control of spending, tax and money policies (but that has been undermined by the emergence of an unregulated pool of \$1 trillion floating in the Eurocurrency market), and (3) a competitive market economy (but that has been replaced by administered prices in both concentrated and unconcentrated industries and by the growing importance of "transfer" pricing and non-market "sales" within units of conglomerates).

The symptom of the collapse is stagflation. Declining fixed investment contributes to low productivity growth and inflation. There's plenty of money around—take, for example, the \$1 trillion in the Eurocurrency market—but it is spent on speculation, including currency games and non-productive, frequently counterproductive, mergers and acquisitions. In many instances, U.S. corporations have not reinvested in new technology but, faced with competition, simply moved overseas to take advantage of lower wages instead of raising productivity and preserving employment here through research and new domestic investment.

The United States is also likely to lose out on much of the important expansion of world trade, which could be a boost to our economy. It is unwilling, Muller says, to recognize that developing countries increasingly expect trade to be a package political and economic deal involving both governments and corporations. They also expect the deal to recognize their national autonomy and public control of resources. If the U.S. is politically involved in arranging the international economy, it is less as a partner and more often as an agent in the subjugation of a less-powerful country in the interests of untrammelled "free market" penetration by U.S. corporations. Few third world countries relish becoming another Chile. They would like to trade with the U.S., but it requires recognition by the U.S. and its corporations of the growing global interdependence and the aspirations of the poor but striving countries.

### A global Marshall Plan.

The "South"—a common appellation for the less-developed economies—will be the motor of growth for the coming decades, Muller argues. Stimulation of the U.S. economy can spur development in the South and in turn invigorate U.S. and other advanced capitalist or socialist economies. Consider this staggering statistic from the Brandt report on world economic inequality: only one-half of one percent of one single year's world military expenditure would pay for all of the farm equipment needed to increase food production and approach self-sufficiency in food-deficit low-income countries by 1990. Instead, Reagan plans to increase military spending and cut back the already paltry aid, increasing the global tensions and instability that make the use of all those new armaments even more likely.

Muller calls for a new Global Marshall Plan to boost the world out of the current destructive slump. (His reliance on transforming the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank into the instruments of this effort is not convincing, given their record, however.) But he also insists on applying the lessons of "development economics" to the U.S. as well as to the less-developed countries where it originated. He believes that the U.S. should establish a quasi-public development bank, set national growth goals, monitor changing

economic conditions to anticipate necessary adaptations and work out strategies for troubled sectors. The key to the effective deployment of funds is "targeting," putting the money where it aids adjustment to a new international division of labor, raises productivity, and increases employment. Muller, like the new conservatives, wants to stress stimulus of supply, but he also insists it must be coupled with demand management and must be selective and planned.

"Conversion of our economy will require a strong leadership and planning role by the government, and cannot be left to outmoded notions about 'market forces,'" Muller argues. Reagan's across-the-board tax cuts and speeded depreciation allowances will not put capital where it is most needed. Also, it does not allow for the "social cost accounting" that development banking permits, whereby a broad range of goals can be used to judge investments, not just profitability of a firm. An incomes policy is needed to control inflation, Muller says, because the post-market concentration of economic power violates the assumptions of traditional government anti-inflation strategies. Likewise, monetarism is an illusion, in part because there are so many ways for large corporations to get around the money-supply constraints that mainly squeeze small businesses.

But for all of his critique of the effects of corporate and multinational power and his analysis of the post-market economy, Muller doesn't always follow through on his own observations. He dismisses greater public ownership without serious consideration (though noting that the high percentage of public ownership in some European economies helps to make government policy stick). He is willing to write off steel, cars, ships and other industries in the U.S., even though he recognizes elsewhere that the failure of many industries here reflects destructive management investment and research strategies rather than intrinsic advantages of overseas competitors. He continually inveighs against protectionism and exalts international free trade, even though he describes so clearly how there is no international free market anyway, so the issue should be posed as how best to manage global trade for mutual advantage. He relies too heavily on existing corporations, modified only slightly by a few more public members of boards of directors, as instruments of progress, even though he recognizes that these private corporations have become social institutions (and therefore, it would follow, need to be socialized).

Muller seems willing to make undesirable compromises on environmental, safety and other public welfare regulation of corporations, even though he elsewhere criticizes another reindustrialization theorist, Amitai Etzioni, for arguing that quality of life improvements must be abandoned now in favor of hard-core development. (Muller notes that such quality of life improvements as greater workplace democracy and ecological sanity are essential elements of an effective revitalization of the economy, given the likely future of the world economy.) And Muller is far too ready to insulate the new planning mechanisms from politics, instituting a technocratic administration over a society in which conflict is subdued, when the very decisions being made are so essentially political and must be decided in a popular fashion, not precluding conflict, if democracy is not to be abandoned.

Yet his weaknesses can be written off as a failure of nerve or political audacity, the result of not pursuing far enough the implications of his own useful analysis. They are nothing compared to the errors in the wrong-headed adventures of Commander Reagan. ■

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## IN THESE TIMES

# Democrats plot their comeback

By John Judis

WASHINGTON

**M**OST POLITICIANS AGREE that the 1980 election did not create a new Republican majority on the model of the Democrats' New Deal majority. If a new GOP majority emerges, it will do so in 1982 or 1984, when voters have a chance to affirm a Republican approach to the economy and defense.

But the 1980 election did signal the end of the permanent Democratic majority, which has not always controlled the presidency, but which has held comfortable margins in Congress and the state houses for 34 out of the last 38 years. The Democrats still enjoy greater party identification than the Republicans—48 to 26 percent by a Gallup post-election count—but the rise of independent voters and divisions within such traditional Democratic constituencies as Catholics, blue-collar workers, white southerners, and Jews have eroded its majority coalition. Except in local races in a few northern cities and southern towns, no Democrat can feel secure.

The Democrats therefore face the challenge of rebuilding or transforming their coalition. A few Democrats—long identified with the Henry Jackson wing of the party—have opted out altogether. But others have advanced plans for revitalizing the Democratic National Committee ("Brockizing it," in the manner of former GOP chair William Brock), setting up Political Action Committees (PACs) and think-tanks, and expanding the party's base.

Efforts to rebuild a party's national organization usually follow a presidential defeat. But given the current structure of American politics, which places candidate selection in the hands of primary voters rather than party-appointed delegates, such an effort will probably not affect the party's fortunes. With the DNC assembling in Washington Feb. 26 to choose a new chairman, *New Republic* editor Martin Peretz expresses the sentiments of many Democrats when he says, "I can't raise a flicker of interest in who becomes the national chairman."

But the formation of independent PACs, the expected decision of the AFL-CIO to enter primary battles, and the growing interest in electoral politics among citizens groups could eventually transform the party. They could do so by creating movements, ideas and candi-

and corporate bigwigs once played in the Democratic Party.

There are numerous Democratic, liberal, or progressive PACs now on the drawing board. Defeated New York City congressional candidate Mark Green, former South Dakota Senator George McGovern, television producer Norman Lear, and moderates Janet Howard and Pamela Harriman are all starting PACs. But the most interesting proposals are coming from Roger Craver of Craver, Mathews and Smith and Vic Kamber of Kamber Associates.

Craver, Mathews and Smith has raised money through direct mail for Common Cause, the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the National Abortion Rights Action League. Last year they raised money for the independent John Anderson campaign. Since the election, Roger Craver, along with former Anderson staffers Ed Coyle and Francis Sheehan, has been setting up a PAC that would be independent of the official Democratic Party, but that would raise money to "protect Democratic incumbents and surface new leadership."

Craver rejected the idea of working directly with the DNC. "When we looked around after the election," he said, "it was clear the Democratic Party was going to take a long time to get its act to-

gether. Anderson raised \$14 million in seven months. You can do it if you have discipline and decision-making on your side.

"But the party isn't going to be able to do that. In the party, you can't deal with issues as sharply as you need for direct mail."

Craver's goal is to recruit 100,000 donors by mail who would give the PAC \$2-3 million to pour into the 1982 elections. The basic mailing list will come from the Anderson campaign, and the issues will be vintage Anderson—"right of abortion, women's rights, environmental protection, and [reduced] military spending."

Craver denies that this mailing constituency (which he terms "the Anderson constituency") will tilt the PAC away from funding, say, a black central-city Democrat whose main issues are economic. According to Craver and other direct mail specialists, the PAC's choice of a revenue base simply reflects what is possible through the mails. "Blacks and the working guy don't give money through the mail," Craver says. "And while the economy is a vital issue, it is hard to raise money on that alone."

But Craver's sympathies do lie closer to Anderson-type "new Democrats" like Colorado Senator Gary Hart, Massachusetts Senator Paul Tsongas, Repre-

sentative Morris Udall (Craver's partner Coyle was Udall's chief aide) and former Arkansas Governor William Clinton. These Democrats project a "clean" image unsullied by urban interest groups; they focus on "middle-class" rather than "working-class" issues; and they tend to see economic solutions, as Anderson did, in the equitable application of punitive free-market remedies like the 50 cents gasoline tax rather than in the redistribution of wealth and power.

## Kennedy admirer.

Vic Kamber is a former liberal Republican who worked seven years for the Buildings Trades Department of the AFL-CIO before setting out on his own in December 1979 as an independent political consultant and direct mail expert. Kamber did some direct mail for the Kennedy campaign. Now he is organizing PROPAC—the Progressive Political Action Committee.

Kamber remains an unabashed admirer of Senator Edward Kennedy and rejects the charge that Kennedy's defeat in the presidential primaries was attributable to his "liberalism" or "New Deal politics." "If it wasn't for Iran, Ted Kennedy would have been the nominee," Kamber said. Asked to define the term "progressive" in the title of his PAC, Kamber replied, "Not John Stennis. Not

**Kennedy aide  
Carl Wagner says  
the party needs  
at least one  
"compelling idea."**

Howard Cannon. People like Ted Kennedy; people with ideas."

Kamber would like to use his PAC to move the Democratic Party in a "progressive direction." "The party has to stand for something if it is going to be effective," he said. "It can't be all things to all people. It can't represent both [Mississippi Rep.] Jamie Whitten and Father Drinan."

Kamber's and Craver's PACs, along with the McGovern, Green, and Lear PACs, could play the same role in revitalizing the Democrats that NCPAC and other New Right PACs played in the Re-

*Continued on page 6*

**Roger Craver's  
direct mail efforts  
will be aimed at  
the "Anderson  
constituency."**

dates outside the official party structure.

## The Anderson constituency.

With the new campaign finance laws, PACs have become the principal means of raising campaign funds. The Democrats have always had their labor PACs and the National Committee for an Effective Congress (NCEC), but the Republicans and the "New Right," through the use of direct mail solicitation, have been able to outpace and outspend the Democrats.

By using their funds to train campaign workers, finance independent expenditures, and recruit candidates, the GOP and the New Right PACs have also become important actors in the electoral arena. On both a national and local scale, they play the role that machine bosses





# IN SHORT

## But can he teletype?

At least four of America's 52 former hostages in Iran were on assignment for the CIA, according to an article in *City on a Hill*, the student newspaper of the University of California at Santa Cruz. The central piece of evidence obtained by the paper was "teletype #8933," a secret message sent on Aug. 9, 1979, from Tehran to Washington over the State Department's covert "Roger Channel" (used only for CIA-related correspondence). The article's author—listed as "George White," a pseudonym—also drew on public documents and an unnamed "deep source" in Washington to refute official U.S. claims that all American Embassy employees in Tehran were "innocent diplomats."

In the secret 100-word teletype, U.S. embassy charge d'affaires Bruce Laingen asked then-Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to provide "cover" posts in the Foreign Service Reserve (FSR) for two CIA officers, Malcolm Kalp and William Daugherty. "It is of the highest importance that cover be the best we can come up with," Laingen wrote. (John Marks, an associate of the Center for National Security Studies, has written that, "although there are rumors of exceptions, the CIA personnel abroad are always given the cover rank of Foreign Service Reserve or [Foreign Service] Staff.")

While it mentioned only Kalp and Daugherty by name, Laingen's message referred to four FSR titles in all. According to *City on a Hill*, the other two FSR officers "may have been Clair Barnes and Phillip Ward. And there may have been other CIA officers operating under the Foreign Service Staff designation"—particularly one Thomas Ahern, who served in the Economic and Commercial Section of the embassy. Barnes and Ward came to Tehran as veterans of respective stints as "telecommunications" workers in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and the Philippines. Ahern had been an Army "analyst" and a "political officer" in the Dominican Republic in 1968—both of those titles being listed by John Marks as possible indications of a CIA link.

## Build a car, lose a check

According to our sources, Chrysler workers were none too happy with the wage-cut and wage-freeze package forced on the United Auto Workers by the corporation and the Chrysler loan guarantee board (*In These Times*, Jan. 21). Only 58.22 percent voted for the revised contract—generally a low rate of approval in contract votes, especially so when workers were told by union and company alike that their jobs were on the line. The UAW has since been swamped by requests from other employers seeking contract reopenings. To deal with those please, the union has circulated a memo suggesting that its negotiators emphasize the concessions in control that Chrysler made in return for the workers' concessions in wages and benefits.

## Solar bank withdrawal

According to preliminary proposals from Reagan's Office of Management and the Budget, solar and conservation projects are about to take a terrible beating. The new Solar and Conservation Bank will be eliminated before it even starts, and the remaining federally-funded solar programs will be cut 23 percent this year and 62 percent in fiscal year 1982. In the same periods, 46 percent and then 65 percent of the conservation funding will be axed. Other energy development projects will be trimmed, though not as drastically, while it seems that the nuclear budget will not be tampered with.

Sam Enfield, budget policy analyst for the Solar Lobby, is most upset about losing the Solar Bank, for which Carter had asked a mere \$246 million to be authorized over the next two years. The bank "would help low-income people who can't afford the up-front costs of solar and conservation and so can't take advantage of the tax credits," Enfield told David Moberg. "And it would open aid to passive solar equipment, which the credits don't cover."

## Sign on the glowing line

Fifty-five prominent Americans have begun to circulate an International Peace Petition, which calls upon presidents Reagan and Brezhnev "jointly to terminate immediately all research, development, testing, manufacturing and deployment of nuclear bombs and missiles." The document's sponsors include labor and religious leaders, as well as "representatives of every major peace group in the country." Coordinating the petition are Sidney Lens and Stewart Meacham, the former co-chairs of the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam. Write for copies to the International Peace Petition, 1127 W. Division, 5th Floor, Chicago, IL 60625.

—Josh Kornbluth



Clyde Loo (left) and Rodney Johnson, two of the "NASSCO Three"...

## Union activists go on trial for sabotage conspiracy

In a trial just now getting underway in San Diego, Calif., three fired employees of NASSCO—owner of the largest shipyard on the West Coast and a major Navy supplier—are charged by federal indictment with conspiracy to bomb the shipyard and failure to register destructive devices. The young defendants, who have all been active in a drive by the Ironworkers union to organize NASSCO, claim that they are victims of a frame-up aimed at curbing the union's strength.

One defendant, Clyde Loo, told *In These Times* how he first ran across Ramon Barton, a police and FBI informant posing as a union sympathizer, who became a central figure in the case:

"He recently joined our ranks at the shipyard as a sympathizer [after



...and the third, David Boyd.

the defendants, along with 14 other union activists, had been fired). All we knew about him was that he was born in South Africa in 1952 and travelled a lot before coming to this country.... He talked like an extremist—he began saying we should put a bomb in the transformer at the facility. We considered him foolish and tried to persuade him terrorism is not the way to win a political battle...

"On Sept. 16—while I was at home—[co-defendants] Rodney [Johnson] and David [Boyd] met Ramon with the intent of stopping once and for all his crazy ideas. They thought they had persuaded him. Ramon told them he had a bomb in his car and that he was willing to drive out to the desert and get rid of it.

"They were still in town, on 28th Street, when their car was stopped by police. The police got Ramon out, found the device and arrested David and Rodney. Everything had

been set up—even TV cameras were there. At that point, Ramon's role became clear. The police came to my house and arrested me, too."

Soon after the arrests were made (just before the union election at the shipyard), Ramon Barton, now under the government's witness protection plan, declared in a TV interview that his goal in informing had been to stop the "communist threat." (Two of the defendants, Loo and Johnson, are members of the Communist Workers Party.) Barton said he was only recently converted to the role of informant, but some of his co-workers believe he had been feeding information about the union drive to NASSCO for quite a while.

The main evidence Barton gave to the police is a collection of tapes he secretly recorded in his van while talking politics with Loo, Boyd and Johnson. Loo says that the police erased a tape in which the defendants tell Barton to abandon his plans for sabotage.

Loo says that a majority of the workers at NASSCO—who voted in favor of the Ironworkers in the recent union elections—support the "NASSCO three." Attorney Leonard Weinglass, a member of the NASSCO Three's defense team, traces the issue back to the on-the-job deaths of two NASSCO workers in a section of the shipyard where Loo and Boyd had previously led a work stoppage because of unsafe conditions. "Their deaths," says Weinglass, "escalated the demand by the workforce that [the 17 fired union activists] be rehired and that strong safety measures be insured. It was against this backdrop that the prosecution against three of the 17 was uncorked."

—Margherita Pagni



Draft registration protesters block the entrance to a Cambridge, Mass., post office with Christmas trees. Forty-four Boston area resisters were arrested during last month's sign-ups for men born in 1962.

## "White lists" for sale at ETS

The ubiquitous Educational Testing Service, whose tests play such an enormous role in determining whether and where we go to college or get a scholarship (and continues to control our access to graduate school, law school or med school) may also be helping some colleges filter out applicants who are too poor or who are simply not white.

The ETS, headquartered in a huge corporate complex in Princeton, N.J., does this through a little-known sideline enterprise called the Student Search Service (SSS). Most high school students who take their college boards probably don't pay much attention to the notice about the service when they are nervously filling out the first page of their tests. They aren't required to fill in the blanks for race and family income, but most innocently answer everything anyway.

ETS says that the SSS aids colleges and scholarship agencies that may want to select students for mailings, and claims that it sends out information only to the agencies selected by each student. What ETS and the SSS don't say is that, for a fee of 11 cents a name, they sell lists of students broken down, among other things, by race, by income bracket, and by test score.

This means that in addition to those schools that may legitimately want to target scholarship opportunity mailings to poorer students, in hopes of attracting them to apply, or to students who did poorly on their SATs but who may have other redeeming features, there is the equally likely possibility that schools and scholarship agencies using SSS figures may decide to pass over those students when they send out promotional material.

There is also the more insidious possibility that a school to which you apply on your own initiative may have obtained a list of "undesirable" students (those with low scores, low income or who are non-Caucasian, say) against which your application may be checked.

According to SSS head Daryl Stevens, during the 1979-80 testing season 11 colleges (which he declined to name) asked the service to supply a "white list"—a list of white students only. Six of those schools, he said, also asked for a "black list" of only black students—indicating, he claimed, that they were simply planning to send out separate sets of specialized promotional mailings. (Those schools might be asking for the additional black list just to cover themselves in case of a lawsuit.) The other five colleges asked only for a list of whites.

—David Lindorff



# IN THE NATION

## WOMEN

# A day in the life of an amateur lobbyist

By Georgia Christgau

NEW YORK

**W**HAT DOES A WELDER from Manhattan have in common with a ninth-grade teacher from Long Island? Shirley Chisholm with Mary Tyler Moore? Food stamps with Human Life amendments? Delegations from the United Autoworkers and the Committee for Abortion Rights and Against Sterilization Abuse (CARASA)? Women's Rights Day in Congress Feb. 4, of course, when 3,000 women—twice as many as expected by the National Organization of Women (NOW) and 50 other sponsors—convened in Washington, the first major lobby group to visit the 97th Congress.

As a New Yorker, I wouldn't be spending my previous lobbying hours with Rep. Hyde of Illinois, author of the Hyde Amendment, which eliminated federal funding of abortion in 1976, but I would talk to him later on the telephone. There was too much controversy about the more recent Human Life Amendment (HLA) to avoid doing that.

Bella Abzug, one of several speakers at the noon rally, sent us lobbying with the words, "This is our House." But on Capitol Hill we were confronted by the ignorance of elected officials about women's issues and the inherent sexism in that ignorance. It was sobering to learn that Rep. Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.) had to rush out of a hearing she co-chaired on women's health because she was scheduled to speak at that rally: there are barely enough women's rights advocates to go around this place. I liked the brevity of one participant who climbed aboard the bus home shaking her head and smiling. "Things are really fucked up."

Perhaps she was thinking of the proposed federal budget cuts, which go double for women and minorities. We will lose jobs, benefits, training programs. Or perhaps she was worried about abortion rights and the Human Life amendments. They confer full constitutional rights on the fertilized egg from the moment of conception and ban abortions except if the pregnant woman would die without one. Chisholm and Abzug had reminded us that women's issues are human issues, but how many people care? A CARASA worker told me that when she explained to one woman how some methods of birth control could be banned by the Human Life Amendment, she responded, "I don't have to use the IUD or the pill. I'll find something else."

Though the New York buses left at 6:00 a.m., they did not arrive in time for the early morning welcome by the Congresswomen's Caucus. But I did not miss their necessarily cheerful hello. The new Republican senator from Florida, Paula Hawkins, is not a member of the caucus; she is against the ERA. I mourn Elizabeth Holtzman, probably more than I should—it wastes time.

Better for me to begin with the low-key, studious congressional oversight hearings at Women and Health. Twelve legislators listened to testimony by citizens: workers discriminated against in medical and unemployment insurance, workers worried about safety and health requirements, and members of the clergy, nurses, doctors and family planning experts.

Chairman Henry Waxman (D-Cal.) occasionally asked a question about pending legislation. Title X, for example, federal funding for family planning clinics. That helped cool me out, convincing me that we were citizens participating in the democratic process, not isolated vic-

tims—like one witness who told the committee about her thousands of dollars in unreimbursed medical expenses—or self-satisfied women who managed to escape the economic and civil rights injustices under discussion.

There was even a temperate word for the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Richard Schweiker, who two weeks ago announced he is against Medicaid funding for teenage contraception and against federal funding for sex education. These views were inconsistent, said Washington, D.C., family planning expert Jeannie Rosoff, with his voting record in the Senate. He was the man in Reagan's administration I had already

### Rep. D'Amato believes birth control is an "individual's right" yet supports amendments that could outlaw the IUD and the pill.

loved to hate; but on Feb. 4, a pro-choice reminded me not to jump to conclusions. Hope for Schweiker? I had none of that.

#### The Senator who isn't.

Sen. Al D'Amato arrived a half-hour late for his afternoon session with us, apologizing with a defensive, "I'm here aren't I?" and repeating his commitment to the Human Life Amendment: Why, he even co-sponsored a new HLA, S.158, on Jan. 19. New York City councilwomen Miriam Friedlander and Ruth Messinger, prepping us for our session with D'Amato, cautioned us not to get surly lest we alienate the freshman senator. So we were polite.

Labor spoke first. UAW members pointed out that first-hired, first-fired policies effectively eliminate affirmative action and that passage of the Walker Amendment (which eliminates federal enforcement of quotas) will certainly do so. D'Amato complained about federal pensions, which are payable after 20 years and adjusted for the cost of living every six months. A federal employee among us supplied the information he left out: she had to be 55 before she could receive her pension, a pension she had paid for out of her own earnings. "I know something's got to go," she said, "but thank you very much."

Then housewives took the floor. Someone from Women Over 40 spoke for the passage of the Displaced Homemakers Act. D'Amato claimed he is at the " forefront" of that movement. A senior citizen pointed out that in Social Security a zero is figured into a homemaker's earning record for every year over five that she has not worked, drastically reducing her benefits at age 65. Another revealed that as a young mother she saved for an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), "scrumping \$5 here and there" from her food budget only to learn that she was ineligible for IRA—she had no social security number, never having worked outside the home.

Someone else wondered whether D'Amato knew how many mothers are sterilized without informed consent as a birth control method, especially in Third

World countries.

We soon drew nearer the issues that affect everyone who has sex with men: sex, morality, and separation of church and state. The familiar gruesome testimony was presented by one woman from upstate: her mother, divorced and sole supporter of three, had died from an illegal abortion. Another explained that she wouldn't be here if she weren't "scared for her life" because of the HLA. D'Amato listened uncomfortably and asked for a "cogent" argument, unimpressed by her threat of withdrawing support: "I'm the senator who wasn't supposed to be," he said.

Congress was a curious request coming

Henry Hyde (R-Ill.), Robert Dornan (R-Cal.) and Senator Jesse Helms (R-N.C.)—all HLA sponsors—about the relationship between birth control and the HLA. A spokesman for Dornan, Bob Marshall, said that the IUD and the pill "kill" and that "we aren't calling them birth control." He also supposed that if prohibiting abortifacients under the HLA proved a problem, their sale might be stopped under the Comstock Act (which bill forbids interstate transport of anything that induces abortion). I asked if he thought the controversy surrounding birth control made the HLA more or less popular. Marshall said, "I think it will be a trade-off. Some women won't care [that they



Bella Abzug reminded us that women's issues are human issues, but how many people care?

from him, since he believes in birth control as an "individual's right," and the HLA poses serious questions about the legality of birth control. Sometimes both the IUD and the pill work as abortifacients by prohibiting a fertilized egg from implantation in the uterus. Anti-abortionists in Congress are unwilling to ban birth control, too, even though the view held by many right-to-lifers is within the "logic" of the HLA. "Look," the teacher from Long Island finally explained. "We have to stop the HLA. You think you can stop kids from having sex? You wouldn't give a 12-year-old a 1981 Fairlane without drivers ed. They can't even do their French homework—they're too worried about VD."

After I came home, I did ask the offices of Rep. John Ashbrook (R-Oh.),

are using abortifacients], but others will be outraged and full of vengeance."

Hyde's office first told me that the matter was being studied, but Hyde called me back later himself. The right-to-lifers, who popularized the term "abortifacient," had a case, he said. Theoretically, he agreed with them; but, practically speaking, one couldn't legislate against abortifacients. He said that when he sponsored the Human Life Amendment he wasn't thinking about birth control. "When do you think about birth control?" I said. "When you have sexual intercourse?" "That's the dumbest question I ever heard," he answered. "That's my personal business." Indeed, Mr. Hyde, indeed.

Georgia Christgau writes for the Village Voice, where this article first appeared.



# Party

Continued from page 3

publican revitalization. But of course there are also dangers in this process. By themselves, the PACs could further tilt the Democratic Party—and the American electoral universe—away from the lower-income, blue-collar, and minority voters who have been abandoning the polls in droves.

Their success could also place inordinate power over election results in the hands of pollsters, consultants, direct mail experts and market researchers. It is debatable whether this group presents a desirable alternative to Fat Cat and Machine Boss control of the Democratic Party.

## Looking for clout.

In early December, AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland announced that he favored primary endorsements by the Federation. In the past, particular unions had participated in primary contests—sometimes, on behalf of opposing candidates—but the Federation had withheld its endorsements. But even prior to the Kennedy-Carter battle in 1980, Kirkland believed that the Federation should try to intervene in primary contests.

"The unions that have moved in during the primaries have gotten a greater clout," one AFL-CIO official explained. "It's much easier to affect primaries than the general election, because organization counts in primaries. Since the AFL-CIO has not been there, they get down to the general election, and they don't count for much."

If the AFL-CIO adopts this policy at its Miami Executive Council meeting next week, it could open new possibilities for labor and the Democrats. The Federation would move one step closer to providing political leadership, rather than simply being an interest group within the Democratic Party. This could provide a needed counterweight to the drift of many Democrats toward the Republican-defined center. It could also provide an umbrella under which a new Democratic coalition could assemble. But there are drawbacks and obstacles to this step by the Federation.

The top AFL-CIO leaders, like Kirk-

**Lee Webb believes "the left has no sense of military strategy" and says its position on the military will have to change.**

land, Al Barkan, Tom Kahn and David Jessup, come out of the Jackson wing of the party. They helped form the anti-McGovern Coalition for a Democratic Majority (CDM) and the anti-detente Committee on the Present Danger. They are strong, but uncreative champions of the welfare state, leery of challenging private sector prerogatives, and longstanding cold warriors, who much prefer Alexander Haig to Cyrus Vance, and Jeane Kirkpatrick (a CDM member) to Andrew Young. While their views correspond to a good part of labor leadership, they don't correspond to the views of unions like the Machinists, AFSCME, the United Auto Workers (which is again considering affiliation) and the United Electrical Workers. It is doubtful that Kirkland could establish the consensus among all these unions that would be necessary to make primary endorsements.

Among Democratic activists and local organizers, there is also considerable skepticism about the Federation's ability to pull off an electoral strategy that would require local organizing. "They're only interested in doing things from the top down," one labor political operative explained. "They care about how many people they can get on the party leader-

ship, but they could care less about really organizing people."

## Up from the neighborhoods.

During the '70s, much of the organizing against high utility rates, unfair taxes, police brutality and inadequate city services was done by state and local community organizations. Among the most prominent of these were the networks of groups assembled under ACORN and Citizen Action.

These community organizations, reflecting their roots in Saul Alinsky-style organizing, were often militantly anti-political. They preferred direct action and pressure group tactics. But as the activism of the '60s and early '70s abated, they have changed their stance on electoral politics. In 1978, ACORN began organizing within the Democratic Party. The Ohio Public Interest Campaign (OPIC) and Massachusetts Fair Share became active in state tax initiative contests. And in the '80s, these groups are planning to move directly into the electoral arena, starting their own PACs, recruiting candidates and training campaign workers. The new sentiment is summed up by one citizens group leader who recently declared, "Issues and neighborhoods don't mean shit if you can't express them electorally."

The entry of these organizations into electoral politics is especially significant because they are most directly concerned with issues and movements rather than candidates and parties.

Citizen Action, which is headquartered in Cleveland and includes OPIC, Fair Share, Illinois Public Action and other groups in Connecticut, Oregon, New Hampshire and Indiana, also sees itself working in coalition with the unions. "We may do a lot of the legwork, but unless the unions come in in some fundamental way, it can't happen," one Citizen Action leader remarked.

Much of the Citizen Action and ACORN staff leadership—as distinct from their elected leadership—comes out of the '60s New Left. They've had the wrenching experience of trying to adjust their initial political visions, which often derived from the most utopian musings of Marx, Lenin, Mao and Che, to a mysterious and often inhospitable terrain. Now they are setting out cautiously in search of an electoral platform. "I still think none of us knows what the relation is be-

tween how we talk about issues and what will move people electorally," one Citizen Action leader commented.

Probably the most ambitious electoral project of this kind is California's Campaign for Economic Democracy (CED), founded in the wake of Tom Hayden's unsuccessful Senate primary bid in 1976. Unlike ACORN and the Citizen Action affiliates, CED has always been electorally focused, but like these groups it has tried to build grassroots chapters and support around local issues like rent control, nuclear energy and unfair taxes.

This year, CED has shifted its emphasis from chapter organizing around single issues to revitalizing the California Democratic Party. "We want the California Democratic Party to become a party of economic democrats that has a coherent and cohesive organization," CED staff member Stephen Rivers explained. CED plans to turn the party's assembly-district committees into "functional committees."

At the Jan. 16-18 state party meeting in Sacramento, CED took the first step. In the assembly district elections, they had elected 400 delegates and alternates pledged to their platform for the Democrats—or about one-fourth of the delegates and alternates who assembled in Sacramento. Starting with this voting bloc, CED was able to elect one of their members party treasurer for Southern California and to secure passage of various controversial resolutions.

The CED strategy is aimed specifically at building a base for the 1982 elections, when Hayden will probably run either for the Senate, for California Secretary of State or for the state assembly.

## National decline.

Most Democrats agree that state and local races will be the most important in rebuilding the party. Lee Webb, the director of the Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policies, has always maintained this, but it now finds support as well among groups hitherto committed to the national party. "The role of Democrats around the country is not to get too hung up about Washington," Jim Chapin, the national director of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC), declared. "Our future lies in the countryside."

Carl Wagner, political aide to Sen. Kennedy, echoes this sentiment. "The Dem-

ocrats have always been an urban, local party," Wagner said. "The revitalization is going to have to take place locally."

But some national focus is needed. Otherwise, local candidates and organizations tend to adjust their views to regional prejudices and avoid national issues. And some of the process of rebuilding the Democratic coalition—which will have to include the Sunbelt as well as the Frostbelt, white as well as black, suburban middle managers as well as urban welfare mothers—must take place on the national level through coalitions among organizations and congressional alliances. This process is now at a virtual standstill.

One case in point is the Progressive Alliance, which was organized in October 1978 by UAW president Doug Fraser. It united a wide range of hitherto competing or quarreling organizations, both within the labor movement and among citizens groups, environmental lobbies and feminist and minority organizations. It represented an embryonic coalition, combining elements of the New Deal and McGovern coalitions.

But the Alliance sputtered from the start. The UAW's Fraser declared that the Alliance would not get involved in the presidential race, but it was never clear what the Alliance would get involved in. In 14 months, it published an excellent study of plant closings, devoted some time to studying reapportionment, and spent one day lobbying against budget cuts. It is now expected that the UAW, burdened by the crisis in the automobile industry, will abandon the Alliance altogether. If another union (the National Education Association is the current candidate) does not decide to adopt the Alliance as its project, it will have to fold up altogether.

Alliance board members present similar analyses of why the Alliance has never gotten off the ground. The most important reason is the UAW's preoccupation with the auto crisis, but also cited are the Kennedy-Carter split in the labor movement and hostility from the AFL-CIO. But perhaps the most widely cited reason for the Alliance's problems is that it never had a clear conception of its purpose.

"The Alliance was a group of people who came together on a wish and a prayer," one Alliance member remarked. "It has never worked for labor. You have to come together on a set of issues. They never came together to do anything. Given the lack of political agreement on a platform and the lack of a commitment to action, they couldn't function in a Carter-Kennedy split."

If the Alliance does indeed fold, there will be a vacuum on the national level that the new PACs and the more conservative AFL-CIO will be unable to fill.

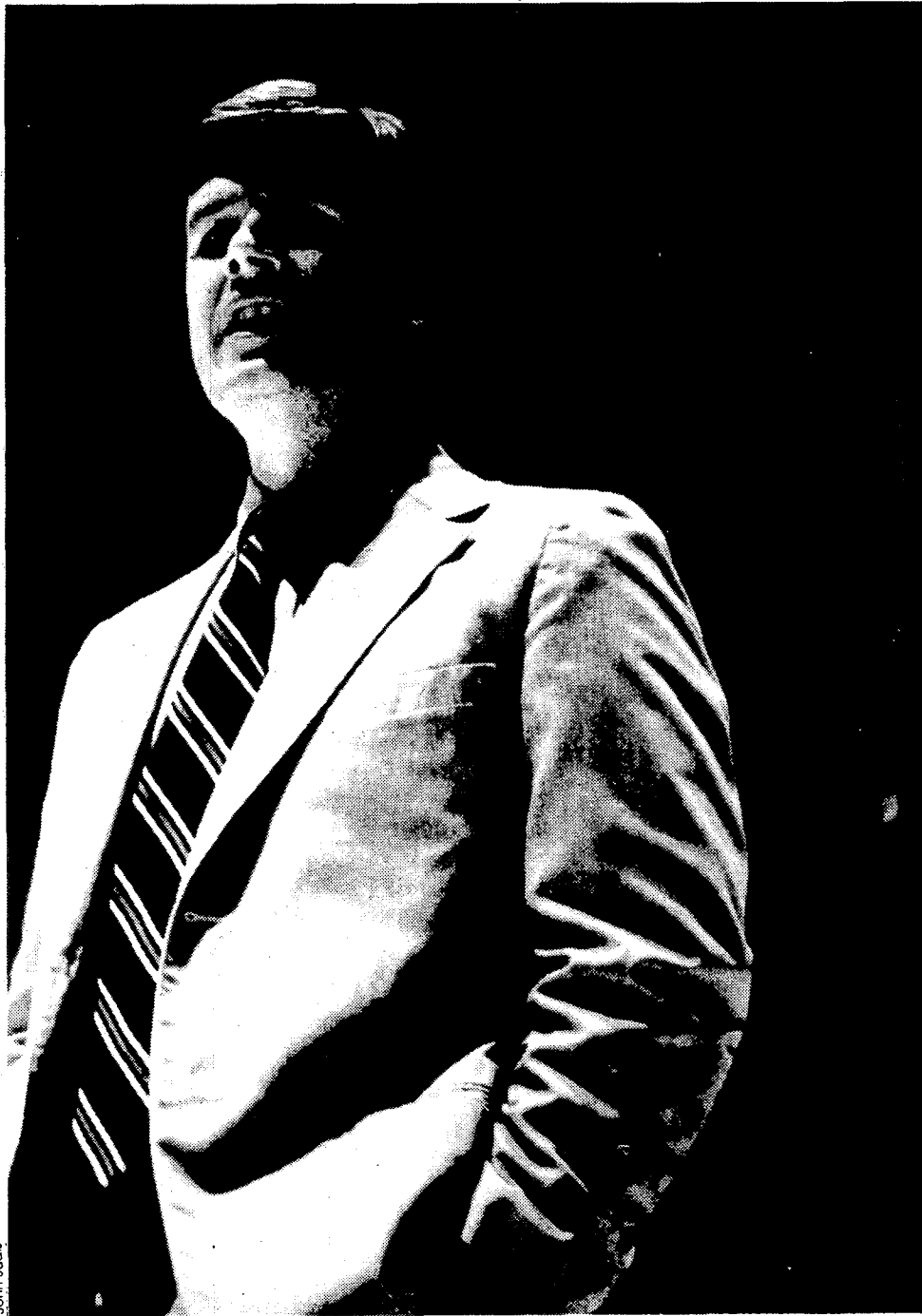
## Money follows ideas.

Besides money, local organization and a national coalition, there is one other thing Democrats are talking about: new ideas. Referring to the Democrats caught up in trying to reform the DNC, Roger Craver commented, "They'll probably concentrate more on the mechanics of party than the philosophy, but that's a mistake. They can Brockize the party, but Brock had ideas. Money follows ideas, not the other way around."

In the 1980 elections, the Democrats were unable to come up with a plausible plan for stemming inflation and unemployment—the urban Democrats tended to stress jobs programs and ignore inflation, while the suburban ones took a hardline fiscal stance and ignored unemployment. They were also caught off balance by the Republican assault on the Carter administration's human rights and detente policies.

There was more than a simple adjustment of paragraphs and commas involved. Traditional Democratic economics, which stressed jobs and not prices, and post-Vietnam Democratic foreign policy, which assumed a peaceful transition to world capitalism, could not account for stagflation, Iran and Afghanistan.

But at this point most Democrats don't have new ideas as much as various schemes to develop them. Gar Alperovitz, Jeff Faux and Roger Hickey, who do have some ideas on economic planning, are turning their Exploratory Project into a National Center on Economic





## THE MEDIA



# Follow the money in *Fortune* report of the Nestle boycott

By Geoffrey Stokes

NEW YORK

**N**ESTLE, THE GIANT SWISS-based multinational corporation, has since 1977 been working to defeat a boycott of its U.S. operations by consumers protesting the firm's aggressive merchandising of packaged infant formula in third world countries. The company has tried to be unobtrusive, but internal Nestle documents first cited in *The Washington Post* and subsequently obtained in full by *The Village Voice* reveal Nestle funneling money through a tax-exempt "public policy" conduit in an attempt to influence "third-party" coverage of the issue. The document names the Washington-based Ethics and Public Policy Center, *Fortune* magazine and *Fortune's* Washington editor Herman Nickel as actors in the hidden drama. It is unclear precisely to what extent these people were willing conspirators and to what extent they were Nestle's patsies. But publication of the memorandum—from Nestle's international vice-president to its chief executive officer—has severely damaged *Fortune's* reputation.

Nestle originally confronted the boycotters directly. At a 1978 Senate hearing Oswaldo Ballarin, president of Nestle-Brazil, capped hours of medical testimony about the damage caused by improper or unnecessary use of his company's products with an assertion that the complaints were "an indirect attack on the free world's economic system. A worldwide church organization, with the stated purpose of undermining the free enterprise system, is in the forefront of this activity." He was virtually laughed out of the room, and in the wake of his blunder a newly-hired public relations firm advised Nestle to keep a low profile on the issue. The recent memorandum, a 1,500-word summary of "intensive discussions" held Aug. 2 to 4 in New York and Washington among international Nestle officials, confirms that this strategy still operates.

In the memorandum (whose authenticity has not been disputed by the company), international v.p. Ernest Saunders reports that "the *Fortune* article, together with the interest of the Ethics and Public

Policy Center, is the best opportunity we have had yet to put the record straight, and *must be fully exploited* [his italics]." The story behind that article—Herman Nickel's "The Corporation Haters," which ran in the June 16, 1980, *Fortune*—is a textbook example of hidden corporate influence in the media.

The article originated at the Ethics and Public Policy Center (EPPC), a Washington think-tank generally described as conservative, but which its founder and president, Ernest Lefever, describes as "mainstream." In 1979 the center published a 126-page attack on the World Council of Church's activities in the third world. The study came to the attention of neo-conservative social critic Irving Kristol, who suggested to Lefever that a study of the infant formula controversy would be "a natural for you because it involves churches."

"A few weeks later," according to the principals, Lefever had lunch with Herman Nickel, *Fortune's* Washington editor, and proposed that he study the infant formula issue for EPPC, offering a \$5,000 fee, half to be paid on submission of the manuscript (due March 1980 but not yet completed), and half when the foundation published it. Nickel says that at the time he knew nothing about EPPC's funding and "didn't think to ask about it." This was perhaps naive, but the prospect of a significant fee can easily lead to a suspension of cynicism.

Nickel said he could not accept until he cleared the outside assignment with

## It was a textbook case of corporate influence on the media—tacky but not illegal.

his editor. Richard Lubar, then managing editor, gave his approval. Though time has rendered the circumstances of that go-ahead murky, the *Post* article describes the okay as "conditioned on *Fortune's* getting a 'spinoff' article," a description that current editor William Rukeyser vigorously denies. Nickel remembers that Lubar said he'd "always been interested" in the story and gave his approval with the comment that "you can get a good *Fortune* story out of it." In any event, Nickel began the research leading to the *Fortune* story with the promise of EPPC money.

Before he had actually begun work, he discovered to his dismay that the money came with strings attached—in particular that a three-person panel, including at least one representative from the infant formula industry, would review his manuscript before EPPC published it. Nickel was disturbed enough to get Lefever's agreement that the presence of an industry reviewer on the panel "will in

no way impair the independence of my study and my right to reach whatever conclusions I find are warranted by the evidence." But he did *not* seek to alter the basic agreement, meaning that his article would go unpublished—depriving him of \$2,500—if it was vetoed by the panel's industry representative. Nickel, who has a reputation for independence, stoutly maintains he "will come to no other conclusions than those justified by my research into the evidence," but admits that "strictly, legalistically," such fealty could cost him \$2,500 if his evidence leads him in a direction contrary to that favored by the industry.

### Money in, money out.

Nickel began his work toward the end of 1979. Meanwhile, EPPC itself, which had been affiliated with Georgetown University, was coming to what both sides describe as an "amicable" separation. In January 1980, it became an independent, fully tax-exempt institution, eagerly seeking public and corporate donations. Among the first companies Lefever contacted was Nestle.

By all indications, Nestle hadn't even heard of EPPC until Nickel began interviewing corporate officers for his study. But, as a spokesman at the company's PR agency explained, "If a study is undertaken in something in which you have an interest, you are curious about it. [Nestle was] curious about EPPC and looked into it." They read some of the center's publications, and met with Lefever, who cheerfully says he told them that while the center didn't undertake contract work on specific projects, its general fund did accept contributions: "They raised it," he reports, "and I said, as I always do, 'We'd welcome it—and please make it a big one.'" In what Lefever and Nestle officials maintain was sheerest coincidence, Nestle gave the center \$5,000—the amount Nickel was to receive—in March 1980—the month he was to receive it.

Because of assignments abroad and a personal health problem, Nickel missed his original deadline. He was still working on the project for EPPC in the late spring when someone at *Fortune* asked him for an article on church activists, corporate responsibility and the infant formula controversy.

There are some factual problems with Nickel's *Fortune* article, but the major objections to the piece have been directed less to its factual content than to its characterization of religious leaders active in the boycott as "Marxists marching under the banner of Christ."

The phrase was contributed by *Fortune's* editor, Richard Armstrong. Nickel, indeed, says, "I would not have used it. I did not use it. He felt the evidence warranted it." But Nickel accepted the change.

Needless to say, the article was greeted with great rejoicing in Nestle's corporate headquarters, and a major proportion of the meetings Saunders held in this country last summer were devoted to the question of how best to exploit it. Enter ever-ready Ernest Lefever.

Under the "Actions Proposed" section of the leaked memorandum, Saunders writes: "There must be maximum exploitation of the opportunities presented by the *Fortune* article and the Ethics and Public Policy Center's willingness to undertake additional activ-

*Continued on page 10*

## Meanwhile, progress on the international front

In January the executive board of the World Health Organization adopted a 20-page resolution entitled "The International Code of Marketing Breast Milk Substitutes." The WHO code prohibits the direct promotion of baby formula to consumers through such practices as distributing free samples and sending white-uniformed company employees to advise new mothers (the so-called Mothercraft program). It also restricts corporate inducements to doctors and other medical professionals to promote formula.

The WHO has no legal authority to enforce the code, which can only serve as a regulatory model for Third World

countries. Nevertheless, organizations such as INFANT—the Minnesota-based group that has played a key role in the boycott of Nestle's products in the U.S.—have welcomed the WHO document, which incorporates the recommendations of a 1979 UNICEF conference on marketing baby formula in underdeveloped countries. Boycott activists say the WHO action contributes to a snowballing awareness of the baby formula issue among government officials and health care professionals around the world.

But INFANT emphasizes that the boycott of Nestle enterprises in the U.S. is still on. Since Nestle is based in

Switzerland, precise figures on the boycott's effectiveness are hard to come by, but it is clearly a matter of considerable concern to the company. (A 15-person office in White Plains, N.Y., has been detailed by Nestle to combat the boycott.)

INFANT also reports that international publicity surrounding the three-year-old boycott has had an impact in the Third World even before release of the WHO code. Nestle has discontinued some of its most objectionable marketing practices and shifted the emphasis of its promotion efforts from consumers to medical professionals.

—Allan Pearlman



## HOUSING

# Tenants' response to housing crisis spills over city limits

By Peter Dreier

BOSTON

**M**AUREEN DUMOULIN, Mary Lou Folk and Larry Weil rarely come into downtown Boston. Dumoulin lives in a mobile home park in Wareham, near Cape Cod, where her major contact with Bostonians comes during the summer tourist season; Folk rents a small apartment in rural Montague, an old mill town in western Massachusetts, almost three hours from Boston; Weil lives in a garden apartment complex in Acton, a small suburb about 25 miles from downtown.

But on a blistering cold Saturday morning in late January, all three made the trip to the Boston campus of the University of Massachusetts, where they joined tenant activists from 25 other groups at the founding meeting of the Massachusetts Tenants Organization (MTO). It is the first time that tenants from across the state have gotten together and a symptom of the new wave of "tenant consciousness" and tenant organizing around the nation.

Over the past three years rising rents, low vacancy rates, condo conversions and fading opportunities for home ownership have prompted new tenant initiatives in almost every major urban area; statewide tenant groups now exist in New York, California, New Jersey, Indiana, Texas and Massachusetts; and a National Tenants Union was formed last June.

As John Atlas, leader of the new 60,000-member New Jersey Tenants Organization and editor of *Shelterforce* magazine, told the MTO delegates, "Tenants'

**In the larger cities, tenants are more than half the population. But a traditionally low level of voter registration and turnout has kept them from being a political force.**

rights is an idea whose time has come. We're at the same state as the early days of the women's movement and the civil rights movement. We've only begun to realize our political power."

Tenants' problems, as well as their political potential, are especially significant in Massachusetts, where the housing shortage is severe and getting worse. According to the state Department of Community Affairs, Massachusetts needs 40,000 new units a year, but only about 20,000 are being built. Vacancy rates in the major cities are less than 5 percent. "Condomania"—conversion of apartments to expensive, privately-owned units—has spread like a contagious disease from the Boston area to cities and suburbs elsewhere.

Much of the state's housing stock is old and in poor condition; this, coupled with tax laws and insurance policies, encourages landlords to torch their properties. Arson has become a major problem in Boston, Worcester and Lynn; statewide, 1,952 units were destroyed by arson in 1979 alone. The problem was compounded last November when Massachu-

setts voters approved Proposition 2½. Boston fire officials have already announced that three inner-city fire stations will be shut down as a result of the tax-cutting measure. Other communities expect to face similar cutbacks soon.

Proposition 2½ included a token benefit for renters, allowing them to deduct half their rent from state income taxes. (This would have amounted to only \$104 per renter who itemized his or her state tax return, and nothing for low-income tenants.) But this part of the tax package will be delayed a year, a sign of tenants' low political profile. In the meantime, landlords will receive a huge tax windfall this fall when Proposition 2½ is implemented. During the November campaign, Jerome Rappaport, president of the powerful Greater Boston Real Estate Board's Rental Housing Association, promised that landlords would pass on their tax savings to tenants. But if California following Proposition 13 is any example, landlords can be expected to break their promises and raise rents instead.

Low-income tenants have been hardest hit. At the same time that the private market is being squeezed by "gentrification," the public housing safety valve is being closed off. Large numbers of FHA developments in Boston and elsewhere are being foreclosed and sold to private developers who displace the original tenants. Nearly 40 percent of the Boston Housing Authority's public housing units are vacant and uninhabitable, despite waiting lists of 10 years or more for other developments. Last November some 1,400 persons stood in line on a rainy day to apply for an apartment in a 100-unit development in the Fenway section of Boston.

Massachusetts has a history of tenant activism. In the late '60s, the combined efforts of the "welfare rights" movement and Boston-area student activists committed to organizing off-campus produced a short but dramatic upsurge of tenant victories. The nation's first advocacy planning organization, Urban Planning Aid, helped tenants and community groups in Boston, Cambridge and elsewhere fight the destruction of their neighborhoods through urban renewal. In 1970 tenants in 10 FHA-sponsored housing projects across the state formed the Tenants First Coalition, which in its heyday had 1,000 dues-paying members and organized successful rent strikes against deteriorating conditions. But the biggest successes came around rent control. Between 1970 and 1972, Boston, Lynn, Cambridge, Somerville and Brookline all passed rent control ordinances in response to well-organized tenant pressure; since then, however, Lynn (in 1974) and Somerville (in 1978) have revoked rent control, and Boston (in 1976) instituted "vacancy decontrol," which removes an apartment from rent control when a tenant moves out.

This legacy provided a nucleus of experienced organizers, researchers, legal services lawyers and activists who were ready and waiting when tenant grievances resurfaced during the past three years.

Simultaneously, and independently, tenants in cities, suburbs and small towns around the state began to come together, usually around some immediate crisis. For Maureen Dumoulin and her fellow tenants in a Wareham mobile home park, it was deteriorating maintenance and a sharp rent increase. With help from the local legal services office, she organized

tenants to put their rents in escrow, picket the landlord's office and force him to improve conditions. She's now a leader of the Garden Homes Tenants Organization (GHTO, known as "ghetto").

In Montague, Mary Lou Folk organized fellow tenants, with the aid of the local social service agency, to get the town's three major landlords to improve building conditions and weatherize apartments. The motivation for the Council of Acton Tenants (CAT) came a year ago when the owner of one of the town's few apartment complexes informed tenants that they had 60 days to move out or to buy their apartments as expensive condominiums. Tenants in other complexes began to worry that they were next. Within weeks, tenants packed a town meeting and passed a stop-gap nine-month moratorium on conversions; they are now trying to get a permit system passed to regulate conversions. (In the past year, 10 Massachusetts communities have enacted some restrictions on condos.)

In Boston, research by the Symphony Tenants Organizing Project (STOP) led to the indictments of both landlords and city officials implicated in "arson-for-profit" schemes.

## The untapped tenant vote.

But despite all this local activism in Massachusetts, the idea for a statewide umbrella group actually developed in Washington, D.C. There, last April, 40 legal services lawyers, poverty agency staffers and housing advocates from Massachusetts met (many for the first time) at a national housing conference.

"We went over to Senator [Paul] Tsongas' office to lobby for more housing assistance," explained legal services lawyer Frank Smizik, "and we all looked at each other and realized how much energy and potential there was just in that room." When they returned to Massachusetts, they began making plans for a statewide network to help existing local groups, start new ones and lobby for statewide legislation.

Tenants comprise over 43 percent of the state's residents. In the older, large cities, tenants are over half the population, with ethnic groups such as Italians, Portuguese, Greeks, Hispanics and blacks making up a large share of the tenant population. But traditionally, tenants have been notorious for low levels of voter registration and turnout, so their numerical strength is rarely transplanted into political power.

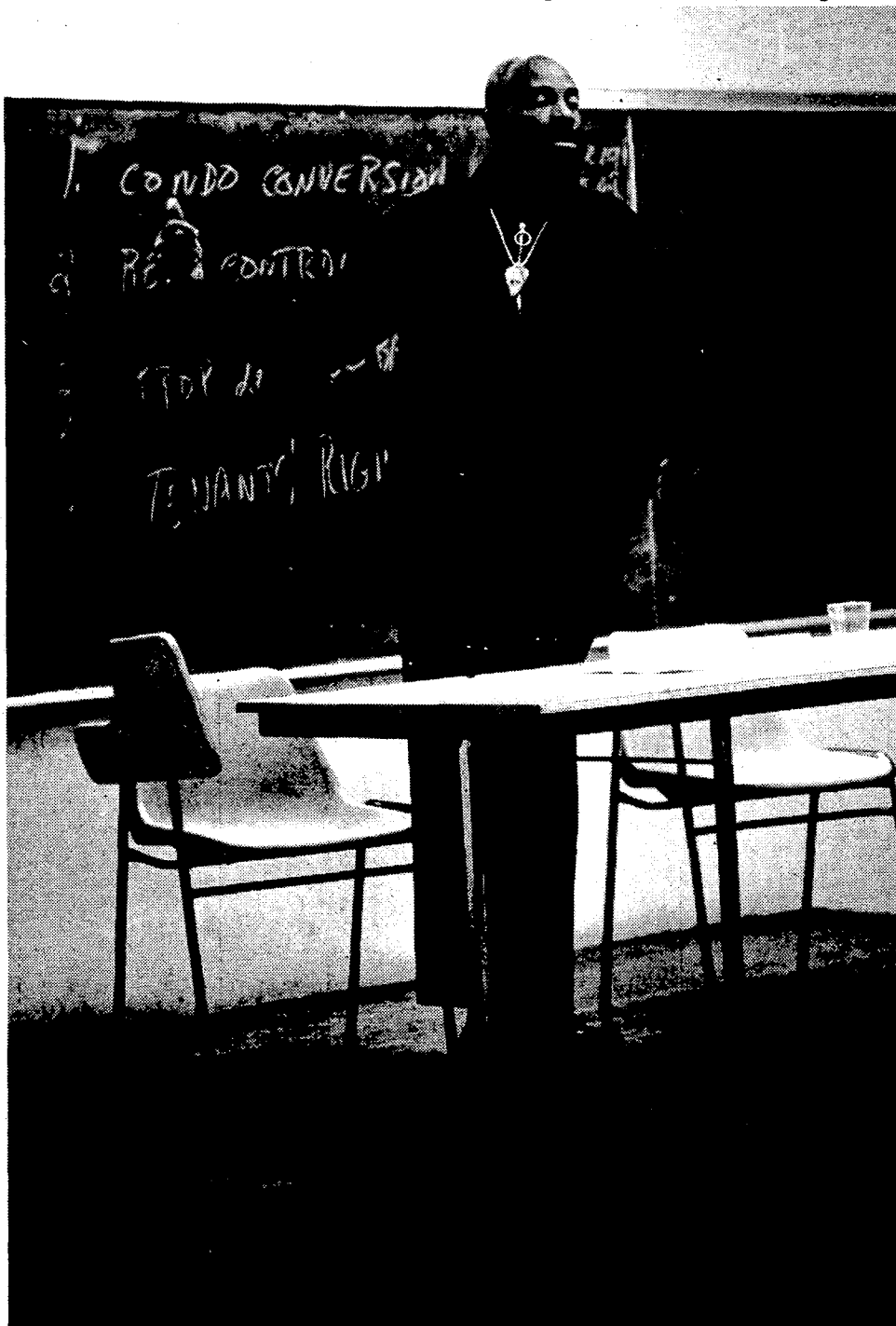
The MTO delegates pledged to change that situation and mobilize to elect pro-tenant candidates. They outlined nine areas of major concern, with rent control, condo conversion, rent reductions from the Proposition 2½ windfall, tenants' rights and neighborhood stabilization heading the list. They also pledged to work on abandonment and code enforcement, emergency housing, weatherization assistance for tenants, and opposing the sale of public housing to private developers.

But the Reagan administration may hamper MTO efforts by cutting back many programs—Legal Services, VISTA and the Community Services Administration (CSA)—that have provided tenant organizations with staff and support services. Already, the statewide advocacy agency Massachusetts Community Action, which supports several local tenant groups, has been told by CSA that it must close in March. Without such government support, the MTO—as well as other community organizations—will have to rely more heavily on membership dues and other grassroots fundraising.

During the election campaign, Reagan's urban task force recommended that the federal government deny funds to any city that has rent control; although the new president has yet to endorse the suggestion, tenants around the country are worried and are getting ready to confront the administration on the issue. MTO will have to join in that effort or watch its local victories wiped out by Washington.

"We can't be content to fight a single landlord within our own buildings, cities and towns," said STOP's Eileen Raphael. "We have to have a broad perspective, coming to each other's aid."

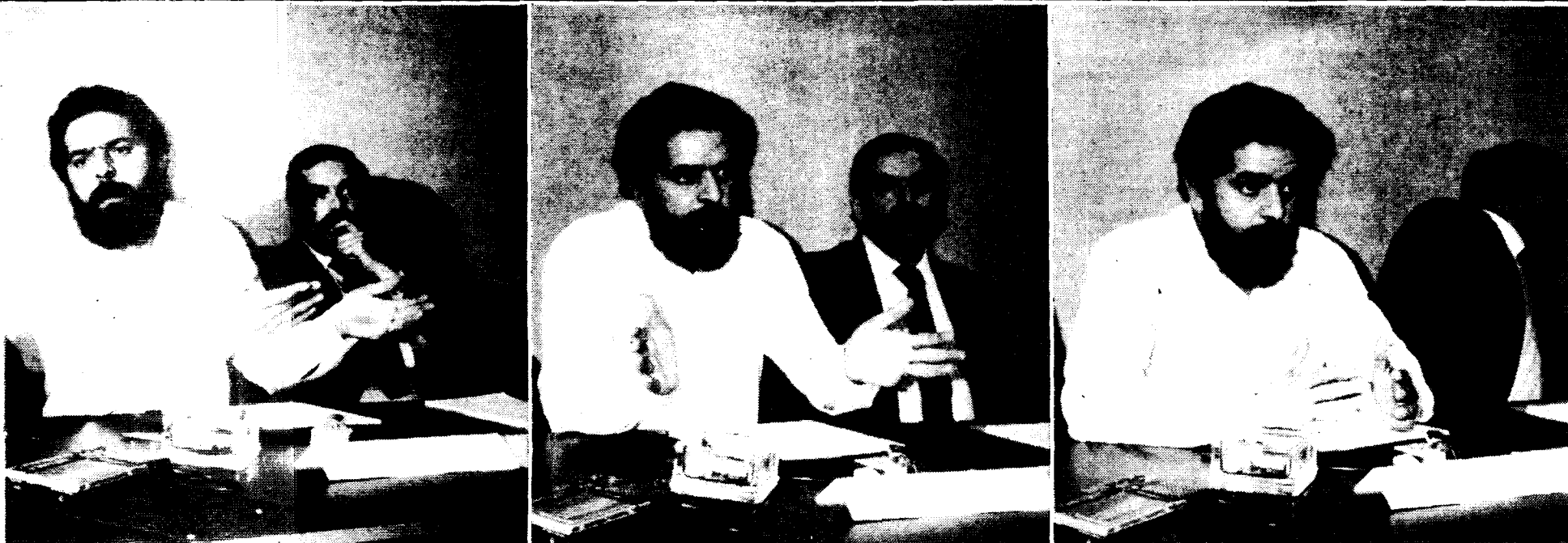
Peter Dreier is an assistant professor of sociology at Tufts University.



State Rep. Mel King ran unsuccessfully for mayor of Boston in 1978 on a strong pro-tenant platform.



# IN THE WORLD



Lula (left), seen here with French union official Jacques Chereque, now feels that international ties are crucial for the Brazilian unions.

## LATIN AMERICA

# Brazil cracks down on labor activism

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

THEY CALL HIM "O LULA" AND in Brazil he is as popular as a soccer star. But when he is cheered in Vila Euclides stadium, army helicopters buzz menacingly overhead and machine guns scan the crowd. He is Luis Ignacio da Silva, at 35 the president of the Sao Bernardo metalworkers union and chairman of the fledgling *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (Workers Party, P.T.). To put an end to these activities Brazil's military regime is dropping its liberalizing pretenses long enough to haul Lula and a dozen of his colleagues before a military court next week.

They are accused of endangering "national security." How? By inciting the metalworkers of the "ABC" (Santo Andre, Sao Bernardo and Sao Caetano) industrial triangle outside Sao Paulo to strike. Which they did, massively and peacefully, for 41 days last spring.

The strike called April 1, 1980, was so well prepared at meetings involving thousands of workers that "no pickets were necessary," exults Lula. "So there was no possibility of picketline violence. The government itself caused the violence, to prevent the bargaining between labor and management." Heavily armed troops occupied the ABC region. Labor leaders were plucked from their homes, from church—one was arrested in the mayor's office—and thrown in jail. After a month, their lawyers got them out, but failed to get the case against them dropped or transferred to a civilian court.

Thus on Feb. 23, the 15 union leaders come before a military tribunal on charges of "incitement to collective disobedience." If convicted, they could be sentenced to from two to 12 years in prison. But whatever the sentence, anyone convicted for "national security" offenses is barred from running for any political or union office.

Lula and his 11 co-defendants are not only union leaders but also belong to the leadership of the newly-formed Workers Party. The trial thus aims at both crippling the metalworkers and lopping off the leadership of a political party that does not fit into the government's scheme of controlled pluralism.

The harassment did not stop there. Last July 21, during peasant struggles in the north Brazilian state of Acre, the president of the farm worker's union, Wilson Souza Plubete, who was also a local P.T. leader, was assassinated. Lula and P.T. secretary general Jacob Bittar, president of the Sao Paulo petroleum

workers, went to the protest meeting that followed. When a farm administrator was murdered, the government police called Lula and Bittar as witnesses and then charged them with the crime. This blatantly trumped-up charge also keeps them from their normal union and political work.

Aware that Lula and Bittar are not really dangerous criminals seeking to flee the country, Brazilian authorities finally granted them temporary passports in time to attend ceremonies marking the first anniversary of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua. Then the two toured Europe to call attention to the Feb. 23 trial that Lula calls "the most important political event since the Brazilian military regime began its much-heralded 'opening' in 1978."

In Paris as guest of the French Democratic Labor Confederation (CFDT), Lula stressed that the "opening" does not involve the working class or the labor movement. The Brazilian regime, under General Joao Baptista Figueiredo, former head of military intelligence, has "opened up" political life for the upper classes with a 1979 law allowing new political parties to be legalized—but only if they can gather signatures of one-tenth of the current members of Congress or else prove they have local branches in one-fifth of the municipalities of nine states. This reform was designed to fragment the opposition, which had been forced to unite in the only legally allowed opposition party, the Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB) after the MDB began to make life in Congress difficult for the government party, ARENA. The P.T. is not a breakoff from the MDB but a new creation of labor militants. It has grown fast but not yet met the standards for legalization.

Lula stresses that the "opening" is "very elitist, not intended for the whole of society." It may be a "liberalization" but it is definitely not a "democratization."

### Talking strategy with Walesa.

Luis Ignacio da Silva was born in 1945 in the northeastern state of Pernambuco in a family of poor farm laborers who, like so many others from that depressed region, moved to the sprawling suburbs of Sao Paulo looking for work. The young da Silva worked a lathe in the Villares steel plant of Sao Bernardo. He was elected metalworkers secretary in 1973 and president two years later.

Disclosures in 1977 that the government had been falsifying the price index to hold down wages were followed by a series of major strikes for higher pay. The problems raised by these strikes con-

vinced union leaders of the need for a workers party, which they founded last July with da Silva as chairman. By this time he had become O Lula, hero of the great ABC strikes of 1979 and 1980. Solid and placid-looking behind his fuzzy beard, he offered the huge crowds—up to 100,000—in Vila Euclides stadium the choice: "Die with our heads down, or die with our heads held high."

In Rome last month, Lula met Lech Walesa. The Brazilian had complained last August that in his country, fierce critics of the Sao Bernardo strike "can't find praise enough to lavish on the strikes in Poland." And yet, "the Poles are asking for the same things we are: freedom to organize their own union, the right to strike, the 40-hour work week."

At first, Lula differed with Walesa on one thing: political involvement. "Walesa thinks he should stay out of politics," Lula said in Paris. "We discussed that in Italy and concluded that even if he says he stays out of politics, in practice he has practically overthrown his government. The main thing is for workers' rights to be respected, whatever the system. Now, I think if Walesa were in Brazil, he'd do what we're doing, and if we were in Pol-

and, we'd do like him. At our meeting in Rome, we decided to keep in touch, because we realized that we Brazilians know little about Poland and vice versa."

Lula says he is a recent convert to the idea of international solidarity. "For a long time, I refused to travel to other countries, because I thought the special problems of Brazilian workers were a matter of national conditions. But now I have been realizing that the problems of Brazilian workers often originate in other countries, where multinationals have their headquarters."

Now he thinks two things are of fundamental importance: first, to find out about European unions—"and we discover that we are 100 years behind"—and second, to talk with European labor leaders about building real international solidarity.

### The lessons of Europe.

The trip to Europe has shown him what freedom is. There is no comparison, he said, between the Brazilian political "opening" and that in Spain (though in Brazil the comparison is often made). "In Spain, when they started the open-

Continued on page 10

In These Times definitely fills a need, an important one, and does so successfully. I've found the foreign commentary and coverage particularly impressive and valuable.

Noam Chomsky

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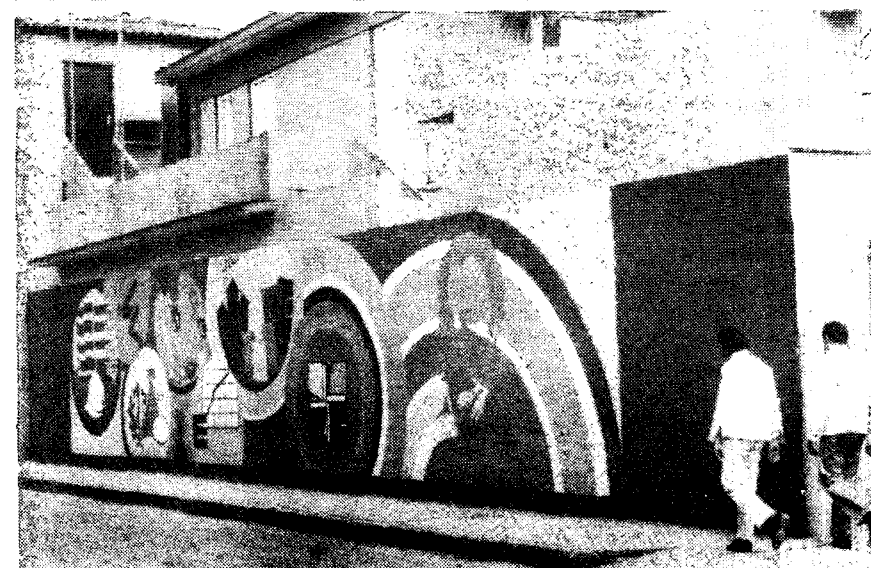
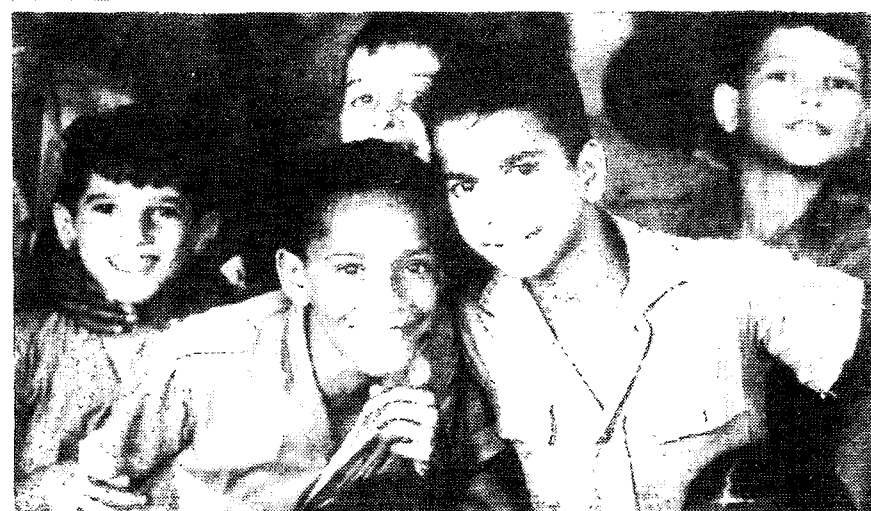
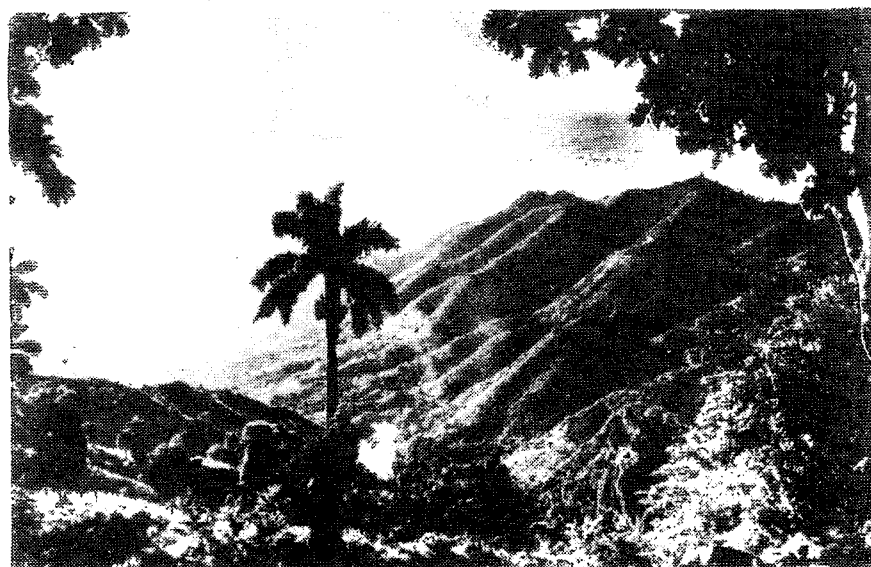
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AS THE 1980S OPENED, the public stance of labor's hierarchs was one of self-satisfaction, reminiscent of the mood of the old-line officials around William Green in the early '30s. There was no sense of crisis. Gus Tyler, a retired official of the ladies' garment workers and columnist for the *AFL-CIO News*, wrote a lustrous piece for the federation's magazine outlining a scenario for American expansion in the new decade that would give wings to unions "as employment grows in building, construction, seafaring, capital-intensive manufacturing and teaching." Lane Kirkland, a few months after taking the AFL-CIO scepter from ailing and soon-to-die George Meany, castigated the "prophets of doom" for misreading "both the present strength and the future prospects of trade unionism for America..." He predicted "substantial gains in union membership over the next decade," especially "in industries and geographic areas in which progress has been slow."

The assumptions here were that labor history was a continuum, free of startling quantum jumps. In fact, however, the movement had come dead-end on a number of occasions in the past, when wide-ranging changes in the character of capitalism diminished labor's strength and dictated severe modifications in program. Such a period was the 1880s. The "uplift" unionism of the Knights of Labor, based on producer cooperatives and reform, but opposing the use of strikes, was out of tune with thriving and arrogant industrial capitalists, who would submit only when forced by workers shutting down a rail line, a construction site or a printing industry. The AFL went too far in the other direction from the Knights, eschewing the socialist politics of its founders in favor of "simple, bread-and-butter unionism." But in matching power with power in strikes, and by structuring itself into craft unions, it better responded to the contours of capitalism in those days than the general assemblies of the Knights, and it was able to build a movement with some muscle behind it.

Another such period was the 1930s, when labor again found itself out of tune with history. The craft structure of the AFL could not be adapted to the mass production industrial corporations—the core of capitalism by that time; nor could the "reward-your-friends-punish-your-enemies" political strategy bring about the passage of unemployment compensation, welfare, social security, labor relations laws and other reforms. If it had not been for the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, with its emphasis on industrial structure and "social" (but not social-ist) unionism, the movement would have remained an impotent pygmy. Again, the CIO did not go as far as it might have, and the radicals who led its major strikes and organizing campaigns were in due course either moderated or replaced. But the CIO was a major advance, not only for labor but also for the country.

In the 1980s, contrary to the consoling phrases of Tyler and Kirkland, there are unmistakable signs that the movement again has reached a crisis. Kirkland boasted that, allowing for expulsion of the Teamsters and the secession of the Auto Workers—the two largest affiliates of the AFL-CIO—the "remaining unions actually increased their membership by 3.5 million, about a third, over those 24 years" from 1955 to 1979. Pursuing his arithmetic further, he listed a host of unions that had lost members because of changes in technology, but showed how this was compensated for by gains of other unions—716,000 for state, county and municipal, 373,000 for teachers,

293,000 for service employees and lesser gains for a few others. But this picture covered over the indisputable fact that labor had lost momentum, attractiveness and, even more, that it had drastically declined in power vis-a-vis both industry and government. In the jargon of Chicago, it had lost its "clout."

AFL-CIO president Kirkland might be satisfied with the record, but his movement has far less appeal to working people (and citizens) than it had 30 years before. Back in 1950, unions won 73 percent of National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) elections. In 8,043 representation elections conducted by NLRB in 1979, unions won only 45 percent, a slight decline from the 50 percent of the previous decade. In the quarter of a century Kirkland was talking about, the work force had grown by more than 30 million, but less than three million had joined unions, and those were largely in one field—federal, state and local government. Very few new members came in from manufacturing and mining.

And these statistics tell only a small part of the story. As great a force as the United Mine Workers, once the most militant segment in the movement, now included only half the coal miners in the country and was bound to decline further as coal-digging continued to shift west of the Mississippi. The building trades, once the bastion of the AFL and later the AFL-CIO, were in retreat under pressure of the Construction Users Business Roundtable, the Committee for a Union Free Environment, the American Building Contractors and other business groups that promote non-union construction. The proud printing trades unions were severely decimated by technology; the Newspaper Guild was losing ground steadily; the steel union watched helplessly as the basic steel industry contracted. And the auto union was on the verge of a great jolt, as the "world car" threatened to shift much of the operations of GM, Ford and Chrysler to foreign soil (assuming Chrysler would survive) and slim down UAW ranks here by hundreds of thousands.

Even the Teamsters were being seriously challenged by the movement of employers south and west, and the establishment of non-union pockets by such operators as Overnite and Viking. More and more employers were demanding—and getting—"give backs," concessions won yesterday, given up today, as management pleaded hard times. And more and more there were plant shutdowns—even of plants earning profits (U.S. Steel in Youngstown was one example) whose owners found it more profitable because of tax benefits to close down than to operate.

In 1979-80 the movement had to take a cut in real wages for the first time since World War II. President Carter—scoring a dubious "first"—decreed "voluntary" (in reality, mandatory) wage guidelines of 7 percent in 1979 and 9 percent in 1980, even though inflation was running about 5 percent higher in each of those years. "Worker buying power shrinks for 12th month," the *AFL-CIO News* screamed in banner headlines on June 28, 1980. "Real wages down 7.7 percent over year." Moreover, under the "re-industrialization" program advocated by both Carter and Reagan in the 1980 presidential elections, it was almost certain that living standards for workers would decline further. Carter's economic development advisor, Amitai Etzioni, predicted the plan would bring ten more years of "belt-tightening." All of this was a far cry from the joyous projections of old-line union officials.

To add to such woes the movement had also lost the respect of the public. For most Americans, including millions of union members, the union was simply another business, and not always an exem-



The American Labor

# Out of Jo with the'

By Sydney Lens

plary one. There were frequent stories of corruption in the Teamsters union, of links to the Mafia, of despoilation of pension funds. The vast majority of unions, of course, were "clean," as far as racketeering was concerned. But reports of scores of leaders representing workers in the \$15,000 and \$20,000 a year class earning upwards of \$100,000 a year—even such political liberals as Jerry Wurf of state, county and municipal employees or Albert Shanker of the teachers—hardly projected an image of idealistic self-sacrifice.

Yet leaving aside labor's apparent weaknesses, including its unpleasant image, the core of the movement's problem clearly was a decline in relative power. Assuming the unions had made a small gain in adherents, as Kirkland insisted, they had nevertheless failed to keep pace with the immense new concentration of power in the hands of business and a business-oriented government. By the late '70s, 100 manufacturing corporations (out of 1.5 million) earned half of all American manufacturing profits, and the top 500 earned 80 percent. In 1955 there had been only 65 industrial companies with assets of \$1 billion; by 1977 the figure was 193, and there were 26 firms with assets upwards of \$5 billion and 12 with assets of at least \$10 billion. The "Fortune 500" industrial corporations (only a tiny fraction of 1 percent of such companies) employed 75 percent of all workers in manufacturing. The 10 leading banks (out of 14,000) held more than a quarter of all bank assets, and the top 100 a half.

Not only was the concentration of capital more pronounced, but its form had

The labor movement needs to shift from a narrowly economic orientation if it is to meet current

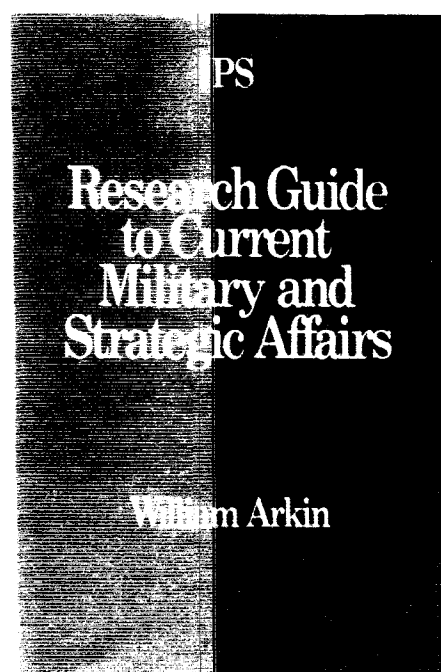


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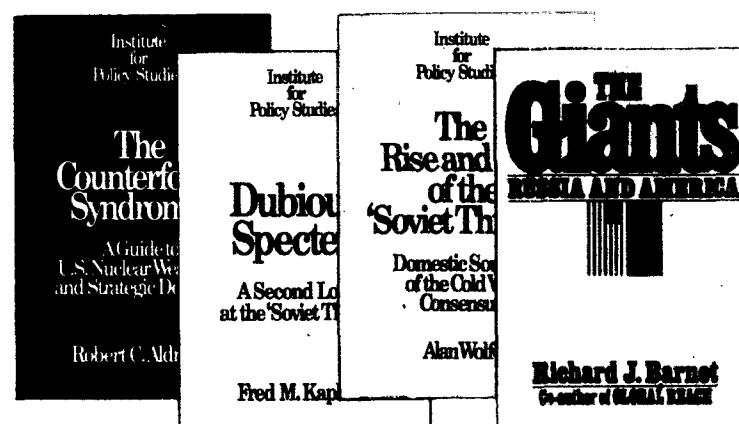
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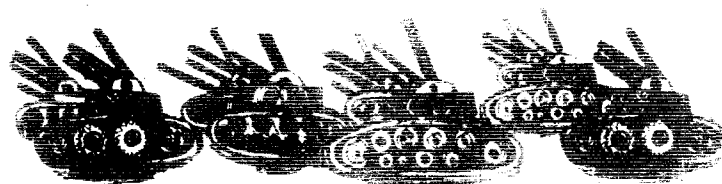
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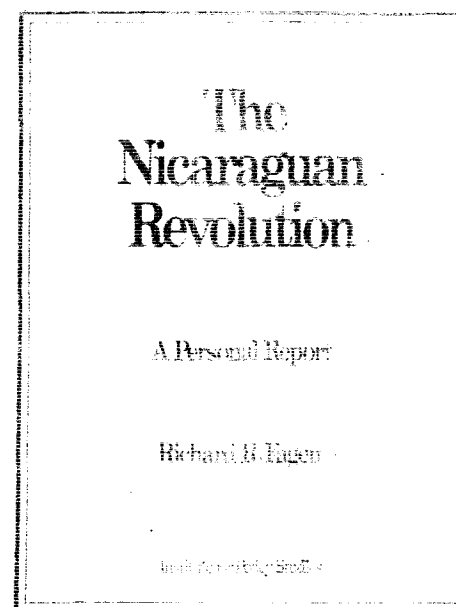


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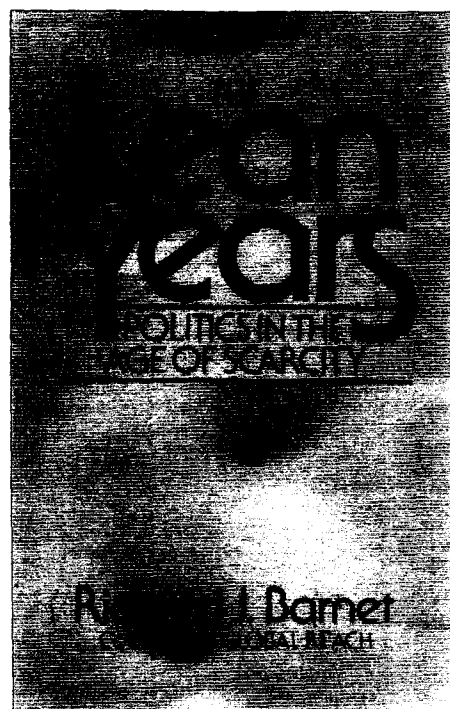
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A lucid and startling analysis of basic global resources: energy, non-fuel minerals, food, water, and human labor. The depletion and maldistribution of supplies bodes a new global economic, political and military order in the 1980s. "... brilliantly informed book... cogent, aphoristic pulling together of the skeins of catastrophic scarcity in the coming postpetroleum world..."

*Publishers Weekly*

**FEEDING THE FEW: Corporate Control of Food**

Susan George. (1978) 79 pp. paper. ISBN 0-89758-010-9. \$3.95. The author of *How the Other Half Dies* has extended her critique of the world food system which is geared towards profit not people. This study draws the links between the hungry at home and those abroad exposing the economic and political forces pushing us towards a unified global food system.

**FOOD FIRST: Beyond The Myth of Scarcity**

Frances Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins with Cary Fowler. (1977) 466 pp. paper. \$2.95.

This excellent study by the Institute for Food and Development Policy attributes the causes of world hunger to concentration of economic policy in the hands of elites who profit by the generation of scarcity and the internationalization of food control.

"... with its vigorously uncompromising point of view and carefully thought out and documented analysis, it is clearly a major achievement."

*The Washington Post*

**WORLD HUNGER: TEN MYTHS**

Frances Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins. (1977) 50 pp. paper. \$2.75.

Synopsis of *Food First*. A useful educational resource for food activists and academics.

**THE BROTHERHOOD OF OIL Energy Policy and the Public Interest**

Robert Engler. (1977) 337 pp. cloth. University of Chicago. \$12.50 (\$2.95. paper).

"the best single study of the energy industry so far."

*The New York Review of Books*

**MIDDLE EAST OIL AND THE ENERGY CRISIS**

Joseph Stork. (1975) 326 pp. paper. Monthly Review. \$5.95. The problem of oil and conflict in the Middle East placed in historical perspective with an analysis of the long-term economic and political forces which underlie the energy crisis and the crisis of Western monopoly capitalism. "This is a readable, well-documented analysis of the Middle East oil situation... highly recommended."

*Library Journal*

**FARMING FOR PROFIT IN A HUNGRY WORLD: Capital and the Crisis in Agriculture**

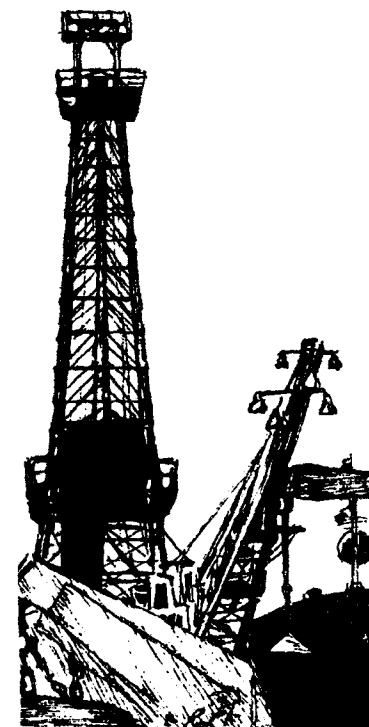
Michael Perlman. (1977) 238 pp. paper. Allenheld-Osmun. \$7.50. Malnutrition and starvation, drastic loss of soil fertility, depletion of fossil fuel reserves, pollution, declining food quality, urban sprawl and unemployment, the disappearance of family-held farms, and the mass dislocation of rural populations—these are the costs of modern U.S. agricultural methods, both in industrialized countries and in the Third World. This study examines the role of corporate conglomerates, banking institutions, government policy, and government-directed research. "A valuable contribution."

Barry Commoner

**HOW THE OTHER HALF DIES**

Susan George. (1977) 308 pp. paper. Allenheld-Osmun. \$5.95. This important examination of multinational agribusiness corporations explains that the roots of hunger are not overpopulation, changing climate, or bad weather, but rather the control of food by the rich. "A most intelligent, urgent and thought-provoking book on a truly vital subject."

John Kenneth Galbraith





# Domestic Affairs

## COMMON SENSE for hard times



Jeremy Brecher & Tim Costello

### COMMON SENSE FOR HARD TIMES

Jeremy Brecher and Tom Costello. (1976, 1979) 277 pp, paper, ISBN 0-89758-02-5, \$5.00 (\$12.50 cloth).

Inflation, unemployment, declining real incomes, environmental degradation, powerlessness at work and away—these are the basic problems that face most people right now. This valuable book tells in practical terms how we can deal with them effectively.

"... the best manual for our 'hard times' ..."

Saturday Review

Well-written, well-researched and well-argued."

William Kornhauser, UC Berkeley

### WORKPLACE DEMOCRACY

Daniel Zuerdling. (1980) 195 pp, paper, Harper Colophon, \$5.95. "... an important contribution ... a valuable source book for all those interested in ... the organization of America's factories, mills and offices."

The New Republic

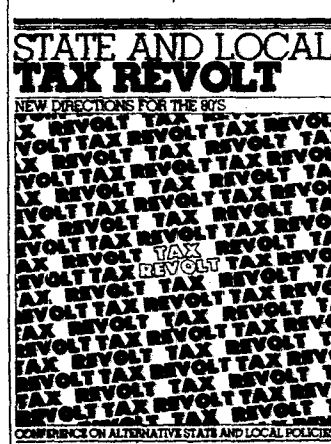
"... an excellent description of the most significant recent developments in worker participation, worker cooperatives, and employee ownership."

William Foote Whyte

### WHISTLE-BLOWERS GUIDE TO THE FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY

Government Accountability Project, IPS. (1978) 39 pp, paper, \$3.00.

This handbook was written to aid employees of the federal government who need to reach the public with evidence of illegal or improper practices in their agencies.



### STATE AND LOCAL TAX REVOLT Perspective, Proposal and Resources

Dean Tipps and Lee Webb, Editors. (1980) 300 pp, paper, ISBN 0-89788-010-2, \$9.95 (\$19.95 for institutions).

A comprehensive guide to state and local tax issues. Progressive tax experts discuss both the problems of tax equity and the prospects for reform initiatives, emphasizing property, estate and sales taxes and innovative proposals for taxing land speculation, business and corporate profits. This compendium includes original articles, material from periodicals, leaflets, and memos prepared in tax reform campaigns.

### STRIKE!

Jeremy Brecher. (1979) 329 pp, paper, South End Press, \$5.50. "The best book I have seen on American labor as a social movement ... By focusing on mass actions of workers, Brecher sheds new light on the role of trade unions and radical organizations in the labor movement."

"A magnificent book. I hope it will take its place as the standard history of American labor."

Straughton Lynd

"scholarly, genuinely stirring ..."

New York Times Book Review

### TO SERVE THE DEVIL: A Documentary Analysis of America's Racial History and Why It Has Been Kept Hidden

Volume I:

Natives and Slaves

Volume II:  
Colonials and  
Sojourners

Paul Jacobs and Saul Landau with Eve Pell. (1971) Vol. I—360 pp, ISBN 394-71459-8, \$2.95. Vol. 2—379 pp, ISBN 394-714160-1, paper, \$3.95.

The classic analysis of the dual elements in the American character—a simultaneous attachment to democracy and to racism.

### POWER AND THE POWERLESS

Michael Parenti. (1978) 238 pp, paper, St. Martin's, \$6.95.

"Parenti's aims are to show how the power structure of the elite-dominated institutions molds individual consciousness, and to expose the invisible controls that limit personal freedom, whether in politics, mass media, unions, universities or the sciences and arts. A pointed critique of our society in which a growing sense of alienation reflects widespread powerlessness, this book could become a sociological classic."

Publishers Weekly

## DEMOCRACY FOR THE FEW



### DEMOCRACY FOR THE FEW

Michael Parenti. (Third edition 1980) 336 pp, paper, St. Martin's, \$7.95.

"One of the most important books by an American political scientist in recent years ... no one before him has taken the standard topics ... and systematically treated them as aspects of the one foundation topic: who owns, controls, distributes and benefits from the wealth of the nation? Parenti has done what and done it brilliantly."

The Nation

### LABOR AND MONOPOLY CAPITAL The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century

Harry Braverman. (1974) 465 pp, paper, Monthly Review Press, \$6.50.

"Written with great force and beauty, (Braverman's study) emphasizes the gradual transformation of work from an active, inquiring, adaptive exercise of human energy and ingenuity into an obedient, dumb, and mechanical application of human strength, devoid of all that is original, ingenious, or creative ... This book is a masterful contribution to the literature of social reality."

Robert Heilbroner

The New York Review of Books

### MANUAL ON PAY EQUITY

Edited by Joy Ann Grune. (1980) 230 pp, paper, ISBN 0-89788-019-6, \$9.95.

Comprehensive information on job segregation and wage discrimination against women. This manual details efforts to correct structural wage inequities through litigation, job evaluation studies, state and local government actions, organizing and bargaining and research.



### FRIENDLY FASCISM: The New Face of Power in America

Bertram Gross. (1980) 410 pp, cloth, M. Evans, \$15.00.

"From his intellectual position on the democratic left, (Gross) shares a nightmare which he desperately hopes will never merge into reality. His thesis, often eloquent and imaginative but occasionally merely strident, centers upon a contrast between classical German fascism and the friendly fascism of his title. The Nazis glorified overt brutality and repression, dismantled parliamentary institutions, destroyed trade unions and trampled upon civil liberties. In contrast, friendly fascism is far more subtle and all the more menacing for that fact ... his case is far too plausible and powerfully argued to be casually dismissed."

Robert Lekachman  
The Washington Post  
Book World

"... a first-rate critique of the present economic crisis in this country ... a valuable blueprint for charting a more humane and just society for all Americans in future years."

James Abourezk

"a challenging look at America's biggest money pot, the Federal Budget."

Ralph Nader

"The issuance of this report is a major political event and a challenge to mainstream ideology. It should be widely purchased."

Library Journal

### THE FEDERAL BUDGET AND SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

Marcus Raskin, Editor. (1978) 470 pp, paper, ISBN 0-89758-001-1, \$8.95.

Prepared at the request of 54 members of Congress, this study describes the Federal Budget, sets new priorities for government spending and presents alternative policies for defense, energy, health, and taxation.

## Knowledge & Politics

### JOHN BERGER ...

... renowned novelist, art critic and documentary film maker, ranks among Britain's most influential cultural critics. Respected for his extraordinary perceptions and uncompromising judgments, Berger is an original exponent of a socialist conception of art. He is a Fellow of the Transnational Institute of IPS.

#### ABOUT LOOKING

John Berger. (1980) 224 pp, cloth, Pantheon, \$10.95 (\$4.95 paper). This new collection of essays and articles written over the past ten years is a fascinating record of a search for meaning within and behind what is looked at. Each photograph, each painting Berger considers is evidence for him of an experience which belongs as much to life as to art.

#### THE SUCCESS AND FAILURE OF PICASSO

John Berger. (1980) 224 pp, paper, Pantheon, \$4.95. In this brilliant critical reassessment of the most famous artist of our century, Berger not only penetrates the aura around Picasso, but illuminates the position of art in our society.

#### G.

John Berger. (1980) 316 pp, paper, Pantheon, \$5.95. Fiction by the author of *Pig Earth* and *About Looking*, winner of Britain's prestigious Booker Prize. "A fascinating novel on the theme of Don Juan ... an extraordinary mixture of historical detail and sexual mediation."

The New York Times  
"Extraordinary."

Newsweek

#### WAYS OF SEEING

Based on the television series with John Berger. (1973) 165 pp, paper, Penguin, \$3.50. Seven essays designed to start a process of questioning traditional "ways of seeing." Four of the essays consist of words and images, three are pictorial. "Concerned not only with the pictorial expression of ideas, but with the relation of these images to the society of the past and of the present ..."

The Times  
"partial, passionate, and politic."

The Guardian




#### PIG EARTH

John Berger. (1980) 224 pp, cloth, Pantheon, \$9.95.

An eloquent statement about the demise of peasant society. Written during the five years Berger lived among the French peasants in the Alps, this new fiction depicts a community of survivors without a future. "Important because it documents (peasant culture) and in some sort of peculiar way stops it from disappearing."

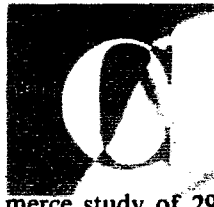
Teodor Shanin,  
Manchester University





shifted. It had become immensely more *trans-industrial*, and *trans-national*. By way of example, in 1961 International Telephone and Telegraph Company (ITT) owned a billion dollars in assets and virtually all of its operations were in telecommunications. By the 1970s, it had acquired a hundred subsidiaries worth four times that much, here and in 70 countries. Only one-sixth of its investments were now in telecommunications, and it was dealing with at least 15 major unions—auto workers, teamsters, communications workers, electrical workers, bakers, plumbers, machinists, steelworkers, hotel workers and others. A strike at any one of its companies—say Wonder Bread—was hardly more than an irritant, since the losses could be absorbed without much pain by other subsidiaries not on strike. And there was little danger that the many unions with interests in ITT would combine their efforts to shut down the company's total operations.

### Globalization.




CORPORATE GLOBALIZATION, too, had punctuated the immense disparity in power between capital and labor. A Department of Commerce study of 298 global firms (multinationals) showed that by 1970 sales of their foreign subsidiaries amounted to 37 percent of their total sales and accounted for 44 percent of their profits. American plants, especially those in labor-intensive fields, had moved wholesale to low-wage areas—Korea, Taiwan, Ghana, Hong Kong. Thus the strike weapon—labor's main instrument of defense for a century—was seriously blunted. There is no way under the present structure for a single union to bargain for workers across the board in a conglomerate or multinational. Nor is there an effective mechanism for a dozen or more unions, here and abroad, to pool their strength against a single global corporation. Moreover, the strike weapon will be

blunted further if present plans for robotization reach fruition. Harley Shaiken (*In These Times*, Sept. 19, 1979) notes that robots, already used extensively in welding, "can switch from one model to another with nothing more than new instructions, rather than the extensive retooling that conventional forms of production require. And as robot technology matures, its cost advantages become more impressive. A \$40,000 Unimate Robot working two shifts over an eight-year period costs about \$4.80 an hour, compared with the current labor cost of approximately \$15 hourly for an auto assembler." And robots do not go on strike.

Labor's relative impotence is especially evident on the political front. Its record in recent years has been dolorous. It has been unable to repeal anti-labor laws such as Taft-Hartley, unable to win the right of common-situs picketing, or to gain long-delayed major reforms such as national health service. Most of all, it has had painfully little influence on government decisions that affect workers' lives. In the '30s, the Roosevelt administration had shifted from the philosophy of *laissez-faire* to that of a corporate capitalism, in which government intervention in the economy was extensive. In the '60s and '70s, government had gone a long step further toward state-managed capitalism. Government—federal, state and local—now dispensed a third of the national income. Its decisions on money, on regulation, on subsidies, on taxes and on a hundred other matters helped shape the economy as never before. If it reduced the military budget, for instance, workers at 100,000 defense plants faced the loss of overtime or their jobs; if it de-controlled the price of gasoline, workers' living standards everywhere would be cut accordingly; if it raised interest rates through an action of the Federal Reserve Board, it would reduce the purchase of new homes and throw construction workers out of jobs. Thus increasingly, labor's problems are political.

### New forms needed.



MAKING THESE TWO broad-based historical changes into account, it was evident that a re-invigorated labor movement would have to change direction, not only to regain the militancy of the '30s, but also to pool the power of workers in conglomerates and multinational industries. The present national unions (called internationals), which operate in a single industry or craft, are adequate in such fields as retail or services or government, where management does not cross industrial or national boundaries. But labor would probably have to add a worker-controlled "company" union structure to the present forms—a single union, say, for all ITT workers, no matter what industry they were in, including ITT workers abroad. In July 1958 an Allis-Chalmers-Inter-Union Joint Conference

was formed of delegates from the Auto Workers, Steelworkers, International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE), International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Machinists, Firemen and Oilers. Each pledged to ask for the same package. But this pick-up type of unity has not extended very far, in large part because the unions involved are too jealous of their prerogatives.

The center of power in the labor movement for many decades had been the city central body. Samuel Gompers changed that by grouping local unions into internationals, and deliberately downgrading the power of city centrals. Now a new structure is indicated, one with autonomous power like the internationals, fashioned to meet the challenge of the conglomerates and multinationals.

Of greater significance for the future would be the shift from a unionism oriented to economic concessions to one oriented toward political gains. That seems to be indispensable. If American labor were to follow the British pattern the AFL-CIO would be the central part of an alliance with anti-war, anti-nuke, civil rights, feminist, native American, environmentalist and other progressive movements. William Winpisinger, president of the Machinists—and the only top labor leader in decades who calls himself a socialist—has proposed for his organization a policy of "coalitionism" that could be the precursor to an American Labor Party. "Coalitionism"—the concept of uniting with outside groups for specific objectives, such as demonstrating against the petroleum barons—is an indicated transition step toward independent labor politics.

As the 1980s opened there were few signs that changes in labor structure, ideology and politics impended. There were few left-wing forces on the scene. The "revolutionary union movements" that had made some headway among black workers in Detroit, had spent themselves. Ed Sadlowski's challenge to Lloyd McBride for the presidency of the Steelworkers in 1977 had captured the imagination of leftists around the country, even though his specific program had been moderate, centering on a basic point: union democracy. But Sadlowski's leftist politics were well known, and a victory for the young director of District 31 might have offered a rallying center for those seeking fundamental change. Another "vital impetus" might have come from the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), which was expected to speak for the 6.7 million women in the house of labor. But CLUW, though headed by a woman whose politics have been left of center, has remained too close to the hierarchy to make a difference.

The force that will spark a new labor left is not yet on the horizon as these words are written. The same could have been said of labor in 1932. But sooner or later, the demands of history bring into being human protagonists who form around those demands—as in 1886 and 1935. The 1980s will be no exception. ■

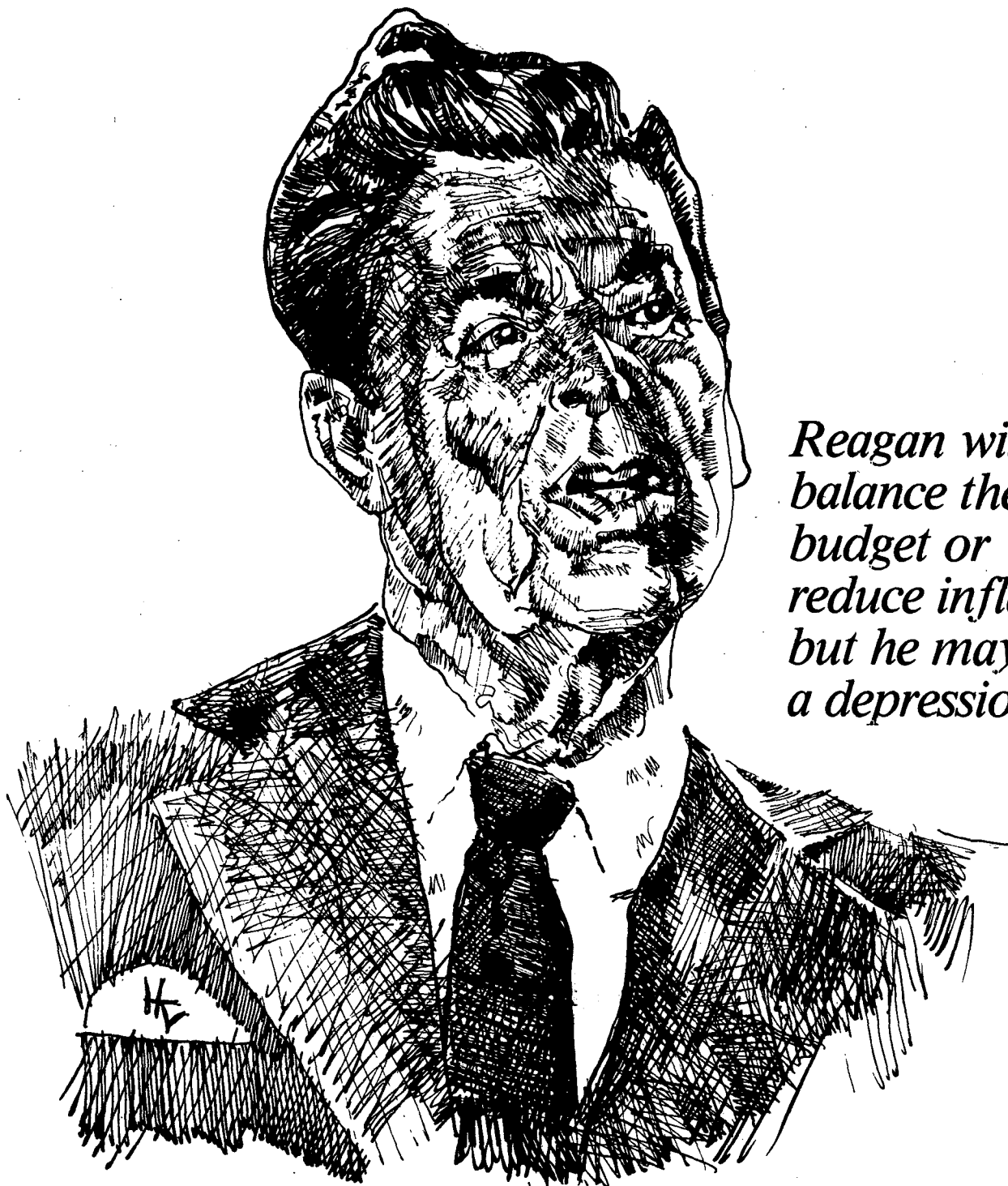
SIDNEY LENS, contributing editor of *THE PROGRESSIVE*, has written many books on labor and foreign affairs. His latest is an autobiography, *UNREPENTANT RADICAL*, published by Beacon Press.

American Labor History Series  
edited by Paul Buhle and  
Alan Dawley.

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## EDITORIAL



*Reagan will not balance the budget or reduce inflation, but he may start a depression.*

## A turning point to nowhere

In his inaugural address and again in his address on the state of the economy, President Reagan spoke of a "nation in crisis." He argued that we have come to a turning point, and that the "old business as usual" can't save us from "an economic calamity of tremendous proportions."

But Reagan did not offer a turn in a new direction. Instead he offered us business—as usual.

In a country where corporate activities are less regulated and government more openly and directly subservient to corporate needs than in any of the other industrial nations whose productivity (according to Reagan) have surpassed ours, the new president identifies "government" as the source of our problems. In doing so, he ignores the fact that corporate interests have had a freer hand in shaping our government—with less direct challenge from organized working people—than their counterparts in Europe and Japan.

In short, if government is the problem in this country, the real problem is that it is a government run by and for big business. And Reagan would not change that. Indeed, his proposals would simply free giant corporations from some of the concessions to the public welfare forced upon them by popular pressure in the last 20 years.

The turn Reagan proposes, in other words, is not the turning point he proclaims, but a return to the conditions that have brought us to our present difficulties. He would cut spending for environmental protection, occupational safety and health, urban and interurban mass

transit, food stamps, aid to public schools and housing, all of which are already woefully underfunded and many of which are already in crisis. And to make matters worse, he will take the money thus saved and return part of it to the owners of our giant corporations through tax cuts while the rest will go to a multi-billion dollar increase in military spending.

Reagan justifies this approach as a necessary means to stimulate productivity growth in American industry and simultaneously to reduce unemployment and inflation. Let us look at his arguments.

### Savings are not the problem.

First, Reagan argues that "punitive tax burdens"—along with inflation—have reduced the incentive to save, which, he implies, is the cause of an alleged shortage of "the investment capital needed for business and industry expansion." He proposes a 10 percent tax cut in each of the next three years, an action that would greatly favor the wealthy, and accelerated depreciation allowances on capital goods, which would substantially increase corporate profits. These "supply side" tax cuts, Reagan asserts, will increase productivity by providing money needed for plant modernization.

One problem with this argument is that there has been no decline in savings as a percentage of Gross National Product (GNP) in recent years. Indeed, as Harry Magdoff and Paul Sweezy recently pointed out in *Monthly Review*, the 14.3 percent of GNP that was saved each year from 1975 through 1979 was the highest percentage (and highest amount) of any

period over the last quarter of a century.

And more important, the problem facing corporate management in recent decades has not been a shortage of capital but rather a shortage of sufficiently profitable investment opportunities, especially in manufacturing industries (see Inside Story, *In These Times*, Feb. 4). American corporate investment programs are not oriented particularly toward increasing productivity. Corporate managers are more interested in quick profits. Management would rather invest in building corporate empires through construction of conglomerates than spend money to develop new technology or for new plant and equipment. In 1979, for example, \$40 billion was spent by corporations to acquire other corporations. This was more than the total spent on research and development. There is nothing in the Reagan administration's supply side tax cut proposals that will change this.

Nor, in the absence of public control of investment decisions, is there anything to prevent U.S. Steel from taking the increased profits it will receive from Reagan's cuts and investing them in Disney World Hotels—or to stop Youngstown Sheet and Tube from closing marginally profitable steel mills and buying up more profitable chemical plants.

As long as there is no social control over such investment decisions, the decisions will continue to be made in the narrow self-interest of corporate directors and stockholders. Many of these investments are likely to be made abroad with no concern for the loss of jobs at home. And the job-creating investments that are made here will either exacerbate the un-

even regional growth now going on, or be secured at heavy cost to the communities in which they are made. (See "I do mind moving," *In These Times*, Feb. 4.)

Reagan does not address these questions, of course. Instead, he proudly recalls that "we invented the assembly line and mass production" and asserts that "punitive tax policies and excessive and unnecessary regulations plus government borrowing have stifled our ability to update plant and equipment." He insists that "excessive taxation of individuals has robbed us of incentive and made overtime unprofitable" and laments that "we once produced about 40 percent of the world's steel," but we now produce 19 percent, and that while we were once the greatest producer of automobiles, producing more than all the rest of the world combined, the big three auto makers "have sustained tremendous losses in the past year and have been forced to lay off thousands of workers."

### Cutting taxes is not the solution.

Reagan then pitches his pro-business tax proposals to working people's concerns and argues that "all of you who are working know that even with cost-of-living pay raises you can't keep up with inflation." That's because progressive taxation keeps taking a higher percentage of income as it increases, so "you find yourself paying a higher tax rate just for trying to hold your own."

"Over the past decades," Reagan continues, "we've talked of curtailing government spending so we can then lower the tax burden. Sometimes we've even taken a run at doing that. But there were always those who told us taxes shouldn't be cut until spending was reduced." But now we have to take action. "We must increase productivity. That means making it possible for industry to modernize and make use of the technology that we ourselves invented; that means putting Americans back to work. And that means above all bringing government spending back within government revenues, which is the only way, together with increased productivity, that we can reduce and, yes, eliminate inflation."

But Reagan is not planning to balance the budget this year. His administration will propose tens of billions of dollars in cuts in social services, but it will also propose tens of billions in tax cuts, and tens of billions (the exact amounts are unclear) in increased military spending. And, as Reagan himself conceded in his economy address, military spending is the most inflationary because it produces nothing that can be bought and used. And, though he neglected to add this, increased defense expenditures also contribute to unemployment. The number of jobs created by defense spending is considerably less than the number created by equal spending in almost any other government program. A 1975 survey by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics found that a shift of one billion dollars from expenditures in military and defense production would generate 24 percent more jobs if invested in mass transit and 85 percent more jobs if invested in public health.

The "freedom" that Reagan has so fervently attempted to identify with in the first weeks of his presidency is at the root of this country's social and economic problems, because it is primarily the freedom of business to pursue profit without regard for the social consequences. It was this freedom that brought the country to the brink of disaster in the Great Depression, which, in turn, was the spur to many of the social reforms and welfare programs that have partially and grudgingly been instituted over the last several decades. Reagan's brand of freedom, the freedom to operate in the market without constraint, brings us back to square one. It is a freedom that only the wealthy can enjoy. ■



# LETTERS

*IN THESE TIMES* is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

## THE CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF FORCE

MOST OF THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE their letters published in your newspaper seem to know quite a bit more than I do, but I am writing anyway to give you my views.

I started subscribing to *ITT* because a friend always had it on her coffee table when I came to visit, and because she always seemed to be so informed about everything. I decided to subscribe too, thinking she must get her ideas from the paper. I must admit that I didn't understand most of the articles, but I forced myself to read them anyway. I had only read the mainstream newspapers which, of course, give quite a different story about this country and the world. I was disgusted with the situation in the world and this country and couldn't figure out why everything was such a mess.

But now, thanks to my friend and *ITT*, I can understand why everything is such a mess. I still have some trouble reading some of the articles, but many of them become quite easy to read and understand now. It is heartening to read that there are many people all over the world who know what is going on and are trying to change things, even though under tremendous odds and at great sacrifice. There is not much I can do, at this point, except keep reading to inform myself better.

—Ronnie Sussman  
Philadelphia

## CHOMPING CHOMSKY

DIANA JOHNSTONE'S ARTICLE, "Chomsky's defense of civil liberties stirs hornets' nest," (*ITT*, Jan. 21) is not quite to the point.

The issue is why Chomsky permitted his article on civil liberties to be used as the introduction to Faurisson's book. It is one thing to defend the right of free speech and quite another to lend his name to this vicious book. Without his introduction the book would have been consigned to the dung heap. With it, he lends credibility to Faurisson's fantastic assertion that the Nazis did not practice genocide.

Fascism, racism and anti-Semitism are on the rise in France and in Europe—fueled by the deepening economic crisis. To be sure, civil liberties must be actively advocated, but responsible and respected leaders like Chomsky have a responsibility also to be quite clear on where they stand. If Chomsky's article was inserted in Faurisson's book without his express consent, then he has an obligation to speak out.

Why doesn't *ITT* request a clarification of Chomsky's position?

—Michelle Martin  
New York

*Chomsky replies: Faurisson's conclusions are diametrically opposed to mine, as repeatedly expressed in print; e.g., in my book Peace in the Middle East?, where I describe the holocaust as "the most fantastic outburst of collective insanity in human history." But it is elementary that freedom of expression (including academic freedom) is not to be restricted to views of which one approves, and that it is precisely in the case of views that are almost universally despised and condemned that this right must be most vigorously upheld. It is easy enough to defend those who need no defense or to join in unani-*

*mous (and often justified) condemnation of violation of civil rights by some official enemy.*

## INTOLERABLE

I SHARE BETTY D. ROBINSON'S ANGER at *ITT*'s recent coverage of the women's movement. Violence against women is not a side issue or a minor "point." Robinson rightly criticized Diana Johnstone's story on the murder of Helene Legotier by her husband, Louis Althusser by stating that "the real point of this incident is that yet another man has murdered his wife." Diana Johnstone's reply (*ITT*, Jan. 28) was truly horrifying: because Legotier was an "independent professional woman" rather than a stereotypical battered wife, there is less need to be outraged by her murder and it is okay to feel sorry for this poor male leftist who killed her. Johnstone then questions the significance of Robinson's concern with marital violence and asks what she is driving at. What she is driving at is that violence against any woman in marriage, on the job, on the street, or wherever it occurs cannot be tolerated, ever.

—Jean Peterman  
Oak Park, Ill.

## OMISSION

REGARDING DIANA JOHNSTONE'S ARTICLE, "Socialist Parties Champion Interests of the Third World" (*ITT*, Dec. 17, 1980), I must express my amazement at her "errors of omission."

Considering the fact that she reported so assiduously on the behind-the-scenes maneuvering regarding the status of the PLO at the 15th Congress, I am at a loss to understand why not a word was mentioned about the Israel United Workers' Party's (known better, perhaps, by its acronym, "Mapam") unanimous acceptance as an associate member of the International. In addition, the International's Bureau was empowered to discuss Mapam's acceptance into full membership in April, 1981.

I attended the Congress as my party's representative there, and had the opportunity to hold discussions, both privately and at larger gatherings, with most of the socialist leaders there. Their enthusiasm over Mapam's entry into the International as a separate party (over the misgivings of the Israeli Labor Party) certainly should have piqued Johnstone's curiosity.

I'm hopeful that this was a journalistic lapse, not an ideological one. Objectively, Mapam's constant struggle toward a just, socialist society in Israel deserves support.

—Dov Zakin  
International Secretary  
Mapam, Tel-Aviv

## DAD WARNED US

THE SNIPER'S DUEL BETWEEN MARTY Jezer and David McReynolds (*ITT*, Feb. 4) brings into sharp focus the reason for the dismal failure of the left in the United States: blind, stupid, dogmatic sectarianism. Imagine where we could have gone since the days of Eugene Debs if we had had a unified left in this country.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if our intellectual giants who know everything about socio-political science had common sense enough to realize that, when fighting fire, whoever joins the bucket brigade is an ally, not an enemy?

But it has always happened since my political awakening almost half a century ago, that the Socialists were not to be trusted because they were luke-warm and too concerned over the rights of the establishment, the Trotskyites were not to be trusted because they, like the Wobblies, had to be in constant turmoil and could not rise above the "stew-pot" and the Communists were to be avoided like the plague because they wanted to colonize America for holy mother Russia. Isn't all this ridiculous?

The father of Marxist revolution warned against "careerists and charlatans." I speak, of course, of V.I. Lenin. I think he hit the nail right on the head. I am unaffiliated today because of opportunistic careerists and charlatans.

—Ted Means  
New Orleans

## SHINOFF SPINOFF I

THE ALLEGATION IN PAUL SHINOFF'S letter (*ITT*, Jan. 28) that progressive Supervisor Harry Britt of San Francisco is a "one-issue legislator" and a legislative lightweight strays far into the realm of anti-left fantasy.

As every observer of San Francisco politics is aware, Britt has fought consistently on a wide range of issues important to tenants and municipal workers. As head of the Housing and Planning Committee, he works to strengthen San Francisco's loophole-ridden rent control law, to stop the conversion of low-income residential hotels into condominiums, and to promote and fund community-based housing developments. He is one of the few public officials who favor cost-of-living increases and collective bargaining for city workers; he broke through homophobic barriers to receive the endorsement of the San Francisco Labor Council in his last campaign.

Certainly, Harry Britt speaks out for the rights of gay people. Would Shinoff prefer that the only homosexual elected official in a city where at least 15 percent of the voters are gay keep silent about police harassment and Moral Majority diatribes? However, Britt is also an articulate proponent of all the progressive reforms that the Bay Area left has championed. No "objective" survey of municipal bureaucrats who prefer business as usual can change that reality.

—Michael Kazin  
San Francisco

## SPINOFF II

I WAS AMUSED TO READ A LETTER from Paul Shinoff critical of your favorable treatment of San Francisco

Supervisor Harry Britt (*ITT*, Jan. 28). Britt may not be the perfect socialist, but he certainly looks infinitely better than the available alternatives. Without going into a lengthy discussion of Britt's merits and flaws, it goes without saying that one does not ordinarily put much stock in surveys of city bureaucrats as to the virtues of politicians—least of all those who fall outside the tedious mainstream. Nor is the *San Francisco Examiner* exactly a disinterested or trustworthy source of information on the left.

Surprising as it may seem, some of us regard a low "ability to transcend politics" and being "overly influenced by gay issues" as a downright blessing. But Britt is not "just" a gay politician. I recall, for example, his excellent speech at a labor support meeting during last year's oil workers' strike. Perhaps Shinoff is a better judge of socialist virtue than I, but he is the last person who should accuse anyone of having "no sense of humor" and being "self-righteous."

—Dick Walker  
Berkeley, Calif.

## SPINOFF III

PAUL SHINOFF'S ATTACK ON HARRY Britt, in the thin guise of a critique of an "uncritical" piece, demands a response. A reporter for the local Hearst paper, Shinoff charges Britt with being a closet socialist, and cites a year-and-a-half-old *Examiner* article in which city hall administrators found him "the least able," and goes on to quote these anonymous bureaucrats to the effect that Britt is a single-issue (i.e., gay) politician with no sense of humor.

This is nonsense. While it is true that his campaign literature has never, to my knowledge, used the term "socialism," his membership in DROC and CED is no secret and has been duly noted in the daily press. At Board meetings, Britt speaks, and even jokes, about such things as the need to "municipalize the banks," and his voting record has consistently reflected the agenda of the democratic socialist left.

As a Tenderloin community organizer, I have had the pleasure of working with Britt on issues affecting seniors and the disabled, on residential hotel preservation and the many problems of downtown development. Not one of these has had an identifiably gay theme, and Britt has provided leadership for the Board in each case.

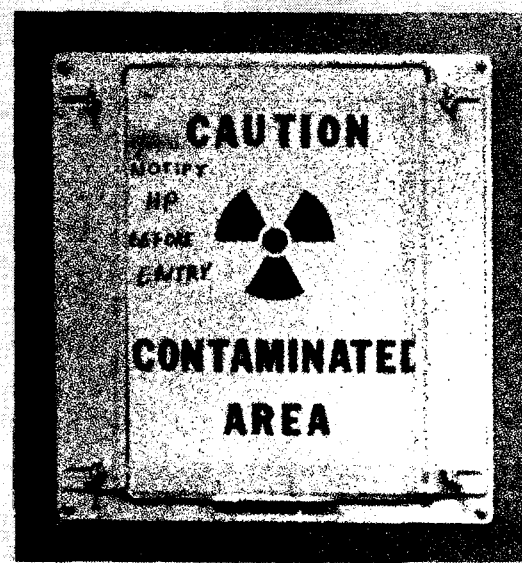
If Shinoff wishes to learn more about the interfacing of socialism and gay politics, I suggest that he attend Harry Britt's forum on the subject at the San Francisco Socialist School, Friday, April 4.

—Ron Sillman  
San Francisco

# NEXT WEEK IN THESE TIMES

## Now What?

It's time for labor to face up to the Reagan presidency. David Moberg reports from the AFL-CIO convention in Bal Harbour, Florida.



## So long, Shirley

A few conservatives have defected from the British Labour Party since the left took over, but contrary to British and American press reports, recent changes may strengthen the party, not weaken it.

## Science in the classroom

Schools and other buildings on Navajo lands built with the refuse of uranium mining are radioactive—and the Indians who worked in those mines are starting to die of cancer.



# DIALOG

## Now is the time for the left to stop mucking about and to master politics

By Sidney Blumenthal

**T**HE LEFT IS FAR BETTER AT providing diagnosis than remedy. In thinking about itself, however, it fails on both counts.

Above all, in the age of political high tech, the left needs to re-industrialize. Like an American steel factory in need of drastic retooling, its productivity is declining.

Being serious in the U.S. means making things work. If one is serious about political ideas then mastery of politics is indispensable. While the left has plenty of ideas to contribute to the national debate, its political skills have become obsolete; as a result its ideas remain secrets to the larger world. More than anything else, failure has become the idea most closely associated with the left.

Consider, for example, the activities of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee during the Democratic convention. The group's intention of gaining influence within the Democratic Party is worthy, and one that has a chance of being achieved. DSOCers present at the convention, however, did not seem to notice that they were entering Democratic politics in a way that minimized their influence. DSOC's politics was Jimmy Carter's turned on its head. Whereas Carter had a politics of strategy without fixed positions, DSOC had many fixed positions but no strategy. At the convention, DSOC held meetings where the time-honored goals of peace, social justice and economic democracy were extolled by all the old familiar faces, in unreconstructed rhetoric. It was the world of our fathers, with appropriate feminist and gay speakers.

The thirty-odd delegates to the convention who were DSOC members worked hard to get progressive positions into the platform. No one seemed to observe that the platform was a meaningless document, a fact that Carter keenly perceived. When anti-nuclear power delegates presented a petition to place Congressman Edward Markey of Massachusetts in nomination for vice president as a way to air their cause on national television, the Carter forces quickly assented to an anti-nuke plank and ten minutes of speaking time for Markey, who was ultimately preempted by network coverage of Carter's arrival at his hotel. Carter's

managers artfully preserved control of airtime in exchange for the rhetoric of the platform. They understood which was more important.

After Carter acceded to the anti-nuke platform language, one prominent anti-nuke activist declared, "We won!" In fact, he lost and didn't know it.

What could DSOC have done differently? It could have had a public strategy for gaining influence. DSOC could have communicated its message more effectively if its members had only remembered where they were. Remarkably, the presence of some 14,000 journalists, many eagerly searching for fresh stories, eluded the DSOC leadership. At least a



Barry Commoner and LaDonna Harris of the Citizens Party.

few of these journalists might have welcomed the opportunity to write about the developing ideological tendencies of the party, the history of the New Left and an emerging newer left, and the analogies between the New Right and the GOP and DSOC and the Democrats. But with no strategy DSOC lost its greatest chance for influence. There was not a single major newspaper story about the existence of a recognized socialist group for the first time at a Democratic convention.

Media, of course, is not everything. But it is undeniable that the functions of political parties have changed. As the New Right has demonstrated, parties today are increasingly susceptible to well-organized, issue-oriented activists. The left issue activists, however, were incapable of comprehending how to act in the new environment.

At least at the mid-term Democratic

conference in 1978, DSOC and its allies created a vehicle, the Democratic Agenda, that made its presence felt and attracted attention. This effort, independent of Edward Kennedy's candidacy, was not sustained at the 1980 convention. When Kennedy went down, so did all those supporting him. After the 1980 platform was hammered out in a Carter-Kennedy deal and then gavelled through by Tip O'Neill, the convention became a stage-managed spectacle.

At that point, or immediately after Kennedy's charismatic speech, the Democratic Agenda should have been resurrected. Delegates who agreed with its general principles should have been mobilized to attend an open meeting, well advertised with the press. At that meeting, the Democratic Agenda should have proclaimed itself a permanent force within the party, free of the fate of any single politician, and reiterated its positions and ideas, emphatically stating that it had won the platform fight and represented the progressive Democratic tradition. It should have proclaimed that although it would support the party's nominee, it would also battle for its ideas and politics in the future.

With hundreds of galvanized delegates in attendance, such a gathering might have had a national impact. The press, taken with the notion that the Republican Party has become the "party of ideas," in the words of Senator Daniel Patrick

Moynihan, perhaps would have tempered its reportage. Instead, at the moment of Kennedy's defeat and the acceptance of the platform, DSOC abdicated.

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### The Citizens Party.

By contrast, another left attempt at practicality, the Citizens Party, makes DSOC look like Richard Wirthlin's polling firm. If good intentions were good politics Barry Commoner would be president. Since they are not, other factors ought to be considered.

Launched by a few wealthy left benefactors, the party nearly expired at its convention from factionalism. One contending faction argued that the focus of party energy on the Commoner for president campaign would detract from developing a mass base. This group believed the party should devote itself to "grass-roots" organizing. The other side, the dominant faction, led by the founders, felt that the Commoner effort would stimulate a mass base by drawing disillusioned voters, primarily from the Democratic Party, into its ranks. In the end, Commoner was nominated and lip-service was paid to the "mass party" faction. But while Commoner received some exposure for his ideas on energy during the campaign, ideas more advanced than those of any other candidate, his party was a vehicle without wheels. By its own estimate the Citizens Party spent about \$650,000 on its campaign, which won about 220,000 votes. The official Reagan and Carter campaigns spent less for each vote they gained.

The Citizens Party does not believe (as DSOC does) that an opening for the left exists in the Democratic Party. Instead, the third party advocates felt that voters faced with the unattractive choice of Jimmy Carter would flock to their side and that, in time, the Citizens Party would replace the Democratic. These notions could be entertained only by dismissing the long history of third parties in America, for in 1980 there were no signs that a great realignment was in the offing. There was no articulated overwhelming

issue like slavery, no new social movement like the populists, no hinge events swinging us into a new era like the Depression. The Citizens Party was not the Free Soil Party.

It was also not the 1948 Progressive Party. If, in 1948, the primary system had been in place, as it was in 1980, there might never have been a Progressive Party, because Henry Wallace undoubtedly would have gone the primary route. By ignoring this real world of politics, the Citizens Party failed to notice the loosening of party structures and bonds in general, which was what DSOC was attempting to capitalize on.

In its most dramatic gesture, the Citizens Party purchased radio time for its commercials. A voice echoed across the country, by way of introduction to Barry Commoner: "Bullshit. Carter, Reagan and Anderson. It's all bullshit." A Citizens Party spokesman, Phil Evans, rationalized this spot: "We honestly felt the word bullshit is being used by millions of Americans to express their frustration at the empty rhetoric being offered by the traditional candidates in this campaign."

But a presidential candidate, however marginal, who tastelessly denigrates himself to the depths of barroom banter demeans his supporters, his cause, the electorate and the idea of democracy, for his campaign appears frivolous. Moreover, Commoner's true problem was not lack of media attention. Given the low level of

Sidney Blumenthal is author of *The Permanent Campaign*, a book on political consultants.

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# PERSPECTIVES

## Our apoplexy over Iran is a case of empire shock

By William Appleman Williams

**T**HE AMERICAN RESPONSE to the Iranian hostage experience—from dumb-founded surprise to frustration, and on to anger and outrage—provides a classic example of psychological shock in the face of unexpected and fundamental change. "They can't do that to us!" But they did. Our spastic seizure over Iran is the latest (but not the last) crisis in the syndrome of Empire Shock that began with Vietnam. Or was it Korea?

I am employing the idiom of Empire Shock in the same way that Alvin Toffler used it a few years ago to describe (in *Future Shock*) the deeply upsetting changes in our domestic culture. We are shaken by the necessity of coming quickly and constantly to terms with the intellectual and pragmatic disintegration of Things As We Have Taken Them For Granted. It is as if the world began to spin the

other way, and the sun rose in the west.

There are many examples, but our response to increased Soviet military strength reveals the essence of the process. Our policing of the Russians in the Cuban Missile Crisis confirmed our traditional assumptions about American power, righteousness and benevolence. We defeated Evil. It never crossed our mind that publicly humiliating the Soviets would provoke them to do their utmost to make sure that it never happened again—or that they might be capable of achieving that objective. So of course we view their success as proof of evil intentions. A central cost of empire is a progressive loss of understanding the connection between causes and consequences.

Even so, and given all that (Korea and Vietnam and Cuba), the OPEC crisis and the Iranian Revolution have probably been central to the disruption of our imperial assumptions and attitudes. That is why it is so vital to clarify the issues.

**First:** Of course the Iranian Revolutionaries violated international law, and

did so in a physically and psychologically abusive manner. But we must put it all in the context of a revolutionary situation. Consider only the way that American Patriots persistently and vigorously mistreated British Loyalists from 1774 to 1783 during the American Revolution. We took their property, banged them about physically, and sent them scuttling fearfully off to Canada or London. To understand is not to condone; but it is to face the reality that, since we are not uniquely good or moral or benevolent, we have no warrant to punish other peoples for their less than perfect behavior.

**Second:** We must confront the reality of our American Empire. Empire generates enormous, deep-seated and persistent anger and resistance in the hearts and minds of those who are demeaned and thwarted by the policies and actions of the imperial metropolis. The British Empire reaped that harvest in America, and the United States has done it around the world since the time of George Washington. Iran's action is a typical example of the consequences of empire.

**Third:** The current talk about punishing Iranians and other peoples economically and militarily is extremely dangerous. (One gets the scary feeling, for example, that a large number of Americans really want the Russians to intervene in Poland so that we can damn the Soviets at untold cost to the Poles themselves.) We must remember and honor the ancient wisdom: let us not cut off our head to spite our ego.

There are many ways to start a nuclear war, and blundering wildly around the

Persian Gulf in paratrooper boots is surely one serious gamblers would favor with high odds. And, even before such action escalated to apocalyptic heights, it would surely convince a majority of Europeans that we were clearly determined to sustain our empire regardless of the cost to them.

The only way to deal with Empire Shock is to recognize that the unthinking identification of America with empire is the root cause of our trauma. We must therefore separate America from empire. A pragmatic and ideological and psychological divorce. I suggest that we approach that act of separation in the following way.

In the context of Iran, let us henceforth evaluate and deal with revolutions as fundamentally indigenous social upheavals rather than as Soviet (or other) efforts to subvert our security.

Let us stop defining our national interest in terms of re-establishing strategic supremacy over the Russians. It is a bootless chase into the boondocks in search of a fool's paradise. Our security lies in extensive and balanced arms reduction.

Let us help the poor rather than competing with the Russians to control them.

Finally, let us cease our foolish chatter about energy independence. That kind of talk bespeaks the arrogance of empire. It is also absurd. Our purpose should be to share energy—food as well as oil—on an equitable basis with other peoples of the world.

*William Appleman Williams is president of the Organization of American Historians. Author of numerous books on aspects of American history, he is a professor at Oregon State University.*

## IN DEPTH

### Jewish leftists meet to set out a new agenda

By Walter Ruby

**T**HERE ARE ALREADY more than 300 Jewish organizations in the U.S. Why would anyone want another? This question posed by many speakers at the five-day Conference for a New Jewish Agenda, held in late December in Washington, D.C., was clearly rhetorical. The conference, after all, was the coming out party for a new national organization called the New Jewish Agenda (NJA), which has quickly been organizing for more than a year. And all but a few of the more than 700 participants representing all sections of the country and a bewildering variety of political and cultural perspectives within Judaism—halachic (religious) Jews, secularists, Zionists, Yiddishists, feminists, gays, leftists and political moderates, to mention only a few—were united in the belief that such an organization was needed to stand for the values of Jewish progressivism at a time when the Jewish community, like the rest of the country, seems to be moving rapidly to the right.

The recent election of Reagan (who captured about 40 percent of the Jewish vote to Carter's 45 percent—an unprecedented showing for a Republican)—and an increasing ascendancy of Commentary magazine style neo-conservatism in many leading Jewish organizations—gave the NJA conference a special urgency.

Now, as the newly formed NJA executive committee and its many task forces attempt to build on the momentum of the conference by creating a mass organization, another question presents itself: Can the NJA avoid the fate of Breira (Alternative), a liberal-left Jewish or-

ganization that collapsed in 1977, after being effectively read out of the official Jewish community for allegedly being anti-Israel? On this question may rest the survivability of NJA, for even liberal American Jews who are highly critical of Israeli settlement and occupation policies under Begin (and to a lesser extent under previous Labor governments) have the security and survival of Israel as a bedrock and emotionally charged concern. Any Jewish organization like Breira, which was perceived to be more concerned with Palestinian suffering than with the fears of Israel, risks labels like "self-hating Jews" or even "Jewish anti-Semites."

Elements of the Jewish establishment have been quick to use this tact against NJA; New York's *Jewish Week*, for example, sought to smear NJA by pointing out in a headline that NJA organizers had used the Breira mailing list, and that former Breiraniks like Arthur Waskow and I.F. Stone had been among the organizers and participants in the NJA conference. Adding to the concern was the fact that at NJA's tumultuous plen-

ary session, a "straw vote" resolution was adopted calling for the recognition of the national rights of both Israelis and Palestinians, including the "right to statehood." This resolution was adopted in place of another calling simply for Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and "mutual acceptance and recognition" between Israelis and Palestinians. A sizable minority of the participants were angered by the explicit call for a Palestinian state, and some decided to end their involvement with NJA on that basis. "I found that, like a lot of other leftist groups, NJA seems to have internalized a lot of anti-Israel propaganda," said disillusioned participant Linda Levy of New York. "But hearing it here in an avowedly Jewish gathering makes me very sad."

Others were less alarmed. "The sense of the conference as expressed in the resolution is that we are committed to the State of Israel as a secure and flourishing Jewish state," explained Rabbi Gerald Serotta, chairman of the NJA steering committee and associate director of the Hillel Foundation at Rutgers University. Added another participant, "We are all committed to Israel's survival, but there are disagreements over how best to assure it."

Rabbi Serotta pointed to what he saw as significant differences between NJA and Breira. "Unlike Breira, which was a small group, cut off from the larger body of American Jewish life, NJA has succeeded in involving a broad spectrum of Jews, ranging from committed secularists to Orthodox, Conservative, Reconstructionist and Reform, as well as the other 90 percent of us who use none of these labels. Also, unlike Breira, with its

exclusive concentration on the Middle East, NJA is a multi-issue organization which defines itself as a part of the American Jewish community."

Indeed, the primacy of the Jewish vision is clear in the NJA charter, as is the decidedly Jewish context in which the agenda is placed. This represents a sea change from the late '60s when leftist Jews seemed ready to embrace any cause or ethnicity other than their own. The unity statement adopted states, "We are convinced that Jewish experience and teachings can address the social, economic and political issues of our time. Our Jewish conviction requires that we give serious and consistent attention to the Jewish mandate of *tikkun olam*, the repair and moral improvement of our world."

A large percentage of NJA members seem to have come from the Haverah "Friendship Community" movement of the '70s, which represented an effort by many groups of young Jews around the U.S. to embrace an egalitarian form of Judaism outside of the institutional constraints of the synagogue. One of the more fascinating aspects of the conference for this secular Jewish observer was to see the ways that the rituals, joy and mysticism of traditional and Hasidic Judaism have been blended into the humanistic vision of love and peace that was the essence of the '60s.

Conference participants joined spontaneously in horas and hasidic song and dance at critical moments in debates; ideological opponents linked arms in snake dances winding around the packed hall in crazy patterns. "In 1970 there were only about 50 people in the whole country who were into this union of Judaism and pro-

*Continued on page 26*



Speakers at the opening plenary session. Gerald Serotta, second from right.



## INPRINT

## POETRY

## A child within the poet

**Deep Song and Other Prose**  
By Federico Garcia Lorca  
New Directions, 143 pp.,  
\$10.00, \$4.95 (paper)

By Shepherd Bliss

*Deep Song and Other Prose* reveals the Spaniard Federico Garcia Lorca in many forms—the protester against social injustice, the eternal child with penetrating vision, the adult overcome with awe upon arriving in New York, the poet who sings and is “always about to cry,” the matador with his “furious challenges, bold attacks,” and the dramatist of “laughter and lamentation.”

Lorca's poetry and plays have long been available to us in English, but *Deep Song* is his first selection of lectures, poetry readings and interviews to be published in our language.

The Spanish people knew Lorca's poetry long before it was first published. He recited and sang his poetry throughout Spain and the Americas. Lorca deeply mistrusted print, preferring the stimulating presence of a live audience of listeners. Of the 13 pieces in *Deep Song*, only two were written for publication.

As he was singing his way into the heart of the Spanish people, Lorca was assassinated by Franco's falangist forces in 1936, at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. But Lorca had already composed the ballads about the hated Civil Guards that Spanish patriots sang in the trenches.

Since Franco's fall, not only has politics re-emerged in Spain, but poetry has surfaced again as a popular art. The new generation considers Lorca to be the greatest Spanish poet of the cen-

tury. A recent film, *To an Unknown God*, was inspired by Lorca. Made in 1978, this fantasy of a man's love relationship with the homosexual Lorca is touching and tender. The film reveals Lorca's deep and abiding influence upon the conscience of his nation.

#### Class and race.

Lorca's identification with people oppressed because of their race, class or sex was not forgotten by the Spanish people. Lorca said, “I am used to suffering. Being born in Granada has given me a sympathetic understanding of those who are persecuted—the Gypsy, the black, the Jew, the Moor.” This people come alive in Lorca's poems, ballads and plays.

The book of poems *A Poet in New York* records Lorca's response to living in that city in 1929 and 1930, at the height of his literary career. From 1931 to 1935 he frequently gave lectures throughout Spain and the Americas of the same title. *Deep Song* makes that oral presentation available in English for the first time.

In his lecture, Lorca contrasts the Harlem he loved to the Wall Street he loathed: “The truly savage, frenetic part of New York is not Harlem. In Harlem there is a human steam and the noise of children and hearths and weeds, and pain that finds comfort and the wound that finds its sweet bandage. The terrible, cold, cruel part is Wall Street. Rivers of gold flow there from all over the earth, and death comes with it. There as nowhere else you feel a total absence of the spirit.”

Lorca describes the rich, the exploiters, the fake prophets

and those who live with their backs to nature as “dancing with death”:

*The drunkards of silver, the cold men,*

*Those looking for the worm under the landscape of the stairs,*

*Those drinking in the Bank the tears of a dead girl.*

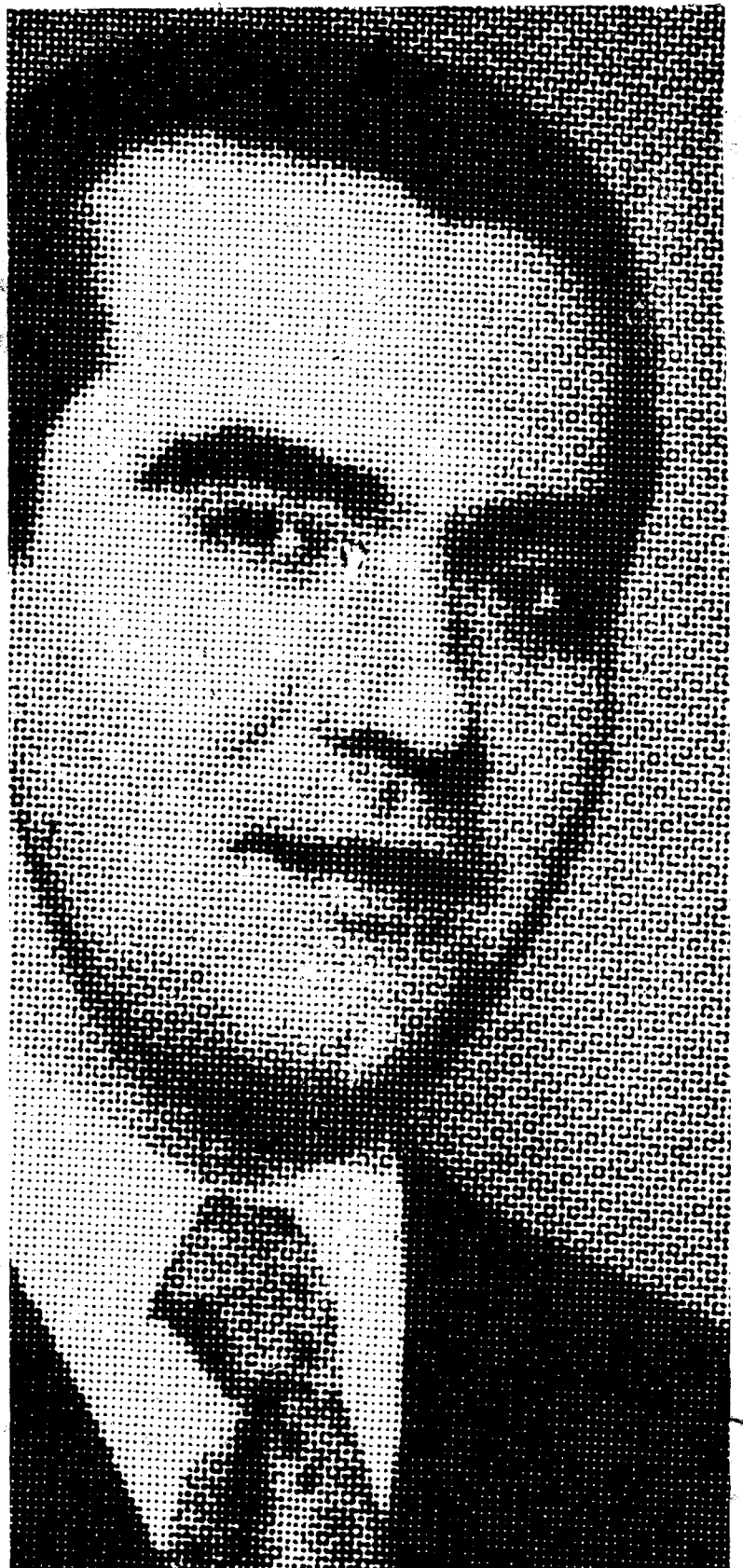
The dance of death rages “between hurricanes of gold and the moaning of unemployed workers.”

In contrast to this New York scene, Lorca portrays black Americans as “the most delicate and spiritual element of that world. Because they believe, because they hope and they sing.” Lorca affirms Harlem as “the most important black city in the world” and he sympathizes with American blacks who “yearned to be a nation.”

#### Women and children.

Like the German poet Rilke, Lorca had great insight into women's experience. His sensitivity to the oppression of women was particularly evident in the female characters he developed in his plays. In the powerful *The House of Bernarda Alba* he wrote about a widow and her five mourning daughters. He returned to this theme of frustrated love in *Dona Rosita the Spinster*, where he wrote about a young woman left “to dress images” after waiting many years for a fiancé who left for America promising to return and marry her.

Lorca's body of work cannot be understood without attention to his deep attachment to children and to the child within himself. In one poem he implores, “Give me back the soul I had as a child/matured by fairy



Garcia Lorca was killed by fascists in 1936.

tales.” In his lecture “On Lullabies” published in *Deep Song*, Lorca seeks to recall the “inaccessible poetic world” of the child, affirming that “the child [is] the chief spectacle of all nature.” Lorca asserts that “no flower, no silence, no number can compare to him.”

Upon finishing *Deep Song*, I

couldn't believe that so much had been said in so few pages. Some poets are unable to write moving prose. Lorca develops a poet's vision in these lectures.

Shepherd Bliss has taught Latin American studies at Harvard and is a translator of Vicente Aleixandre's *A Longing for the Light*, from Harper and Row.

## POLITICS

## Simple Simon tells a sorry tale

**A Time for Action**  
By William E. Simon  
Reader's Digest Books, \$2.75

By Sidney Blumenthal

Jane Fonda runs America. Sure, and she's aided and abetted by John Kenneth Galbraith, Barry Commoner and, of course, Tom Hayden. Scholars who argue about matters such as Cowboys versus Yankees, the circulation of elites, and the significance of the military-industrial complex will be relieved to know that the issue of who happens to be in control of this country has been authoritatively resolved by former Secretary of the Treasury William Simon in his new book, *A Time for Action*. Above his name on the book's cover is a blurb trumpeting this book as one going “beyond his best-selling *A Time for Truth*,” and never was a bit of puffery more accurate.

In his previous volume, Simon identified a “New Despotism” of “government regulation,” whose intent is equality, as the enemy of society. Now he's prepared to name those nefarious figures pulling the strings of a “new collectivist coalition whose no-growth philosophy would guarantee a permanent depression.” Already this shadowy group of movie stars, biologists and economists is “in effect, running the country.” Their program is to convince the country that there is an “energy crisis” when actually there's just “government interference.” Writes Simon: “Not continuing the joyride is what this new environmentalist crusade is all about.” He believes that the “new collectivists” are extremely powerful; in fact, they are “the secret system...the dominant method of governing in our country today.” The “secret system” is linked by hidden connections between “the med-

### Simon thinks that radicals and the media secretly run this country

ia, the public interest groups and think tanks, the second and third echelons of the bureaucracy and, increasingly, the courts.”

What does the “secret system” do? Well, it thwarts economic growth, shackling the oil companies, preventing them from ending our dependence on foreign petroleum; it bloats government bureaucracy; it distorts the news; and it undermines our national defense. Simon says, “Look at virtually any trouble spot in the world today and you

find the influence of the Soviets and their Cuban and East German stooges.” In the field of U.S. foreign policy the “Fondanader-Commoner axis” doesn't rule. Rather, a “radical” think tank, the Institute for Policy Studies, which wants to “destroy the United States,” has had its policy proposals “converted into official strategy.” And this group of intellectuals has a “death grip” on “our nation.”

#### Conservative estimates.

What does Simon think needs to be done? He wants to unleash the oil companies and the CIA while curbing government and the “secret system.” If “the despots in the Kremlin or the ‘Third World’ noisemakers at the United Nations” don't like it, “too bad,” Simon says. As for the media, he says, “Freedom is indivisible and the media spokesmen who have been working overtime to deny liberty to

others may someday discover that they have forfeited their own.” (This is what's known as a thinly veiled threat.)

Is *A Time for Action* what conservatives are talking about when they proclaim a revival of conservative thought in America? Simon's book is widely promoted by conservative groups, treated with respect by conservative intellectuals, and quoted by some corporate executives as an authentic expression of their concerns. Why can't they recognize him as the threat he is—to the conservative movement? By permitting the chainsaw mind of William Simon to sputter away, without any reputable conservatives trying to shut him off, the public will get the impression that his paranoia, simplistic panaceas and crude name-calling are what conservatism is all about.

Simon is a blunt instrument, not a thinker. Conservative failure to repudiate his conspiratorial nonsense can only lead to the conclusion that conservatives agree with him. And almost everybody knows that conservatives aren't dumb. Right?

Sidney Blumenthal is the author of *The Permanent Campaign*, a book about political consultants.



## PAINTING

# Hopper's lonely crowd

By Peter Fuller

Edward Hopper, a large man as taciturn as the figures in many of his paintings, used to grumble that those who talked about his paintings overdid "the loneliness thing." Nonetheless, his best pictures (many of which are included in the retrospective recently at the Whitney Museum in New

*His paintings are about the futility and sadness on the fringes of the American dream.*

York and now traveling through Europe and the U.S.) seem to depict the experience of isolation: Hopper's people are lost within themselves, even when they are in the presence of others.

Hopper did not like being called "an American scene painter" either. There it is easier to go along with him. His famous pictures of a man standing by a row of petrol pumps outside a rural filling station, or of shop facades on Seventh Avenue, Manhattan, on a Sunday morning are as concerned with a certain "structure of feeling" as with topography. But that "structure of feeling" is "the loneliness thing."

It would, in fact, be hard to say anything convincing about Hopper without stressing "the loneliness thing." His paintings are so conspicuously *about* the vacuity, sadness, futility, emptiness and, yes, experience of alienation on the fringes of "The American Dream." But how does this relate to the qualities of his work and to his stature as an artist?

Hopper is an embarrassment to American partisans of Modernism and avant-gardism. Their art history books and the lay-out of their modern art museums are designed to prove that all that is of value in recent art has been created by handing down the torch of stylistic innovation first ignited by Cézanne. But it was just this development Hopper refused. He objected to the "pappy qualities" of Cézanne and was not significantly affected by anything that happened later. Yet Hopper clearly could not be dismissed as some hillbilly regionalist or primitive.

More recently, however, even the art institutions have begun to acknowledge that Modernism is in crisis. What once looked like Hopper's weaknesses are now acclaimed as his strengths. He is praised as the painter of "modern life," *par excellence*. Alternatively, he is interpreted as a great, neutral "realist" who refused style altogether, and simply transcribed, exactly, the appearances of contemporary reality. But these estimates of Hop-

per won't stand up either. There are many bad paintings about "modern life." Hopper himself painted some of them. Not more than 15 of his pictures are wholly convincing, and there are works in this exhibition so second-rate that it is hard to believe they were made by the man who produced, say, *Nighthawks*. But those Hoppers that approach the condition of masterpieces are certainly *not* the ones in which he most faithfully transcribes appearances. The working drawings included in this exhibition demonstrate how carefully his best paintings were constituted. All sorts of disparate observed elements are used to construct a single picture. The artist's role is anything but "neutral." The case of Edward Hopper appears more complex than either the Modernists, or their opponents, allow.

To understand Hopper's qualities, we have to seek out the roots of his particular expressive practice. He was taught by Robert Henri, a turn-of-the-century American artist with a deep admiration for Velasquez, Hals, Goya, Daumier and the pre-Impressionist pictures of Manet and Degas. Henri wanted an art saturated in "modern life": but he tried to realize this through physiognomy—the expressions of his subjects.

But in 1906 Hopper went to Paris and encountered Impressionism. All he had learned led him to resist the dissolution of

concrete forms into hazes of light. Nonetheless, in his painting he began to rely not just on the body (and the world) as objects of perception, but also upon elements drawn from the processes of perception themselves.

After 1910, Hopper never crossed the Atlantic again, but it took him a long time to integrate what he had learned during his American apprenticeship, and

the discoveries of his visits to Paris. In the 1920s, when he was in his forties, Hopper finally found a way of working in which the expressive potentialities of the figure, perceived space, and light were combined together under the directing force of the imagination to create convincing pictures. Through these painterly means he could, when he wished, say something about those "structures of feeling" characteristic of "modern life."

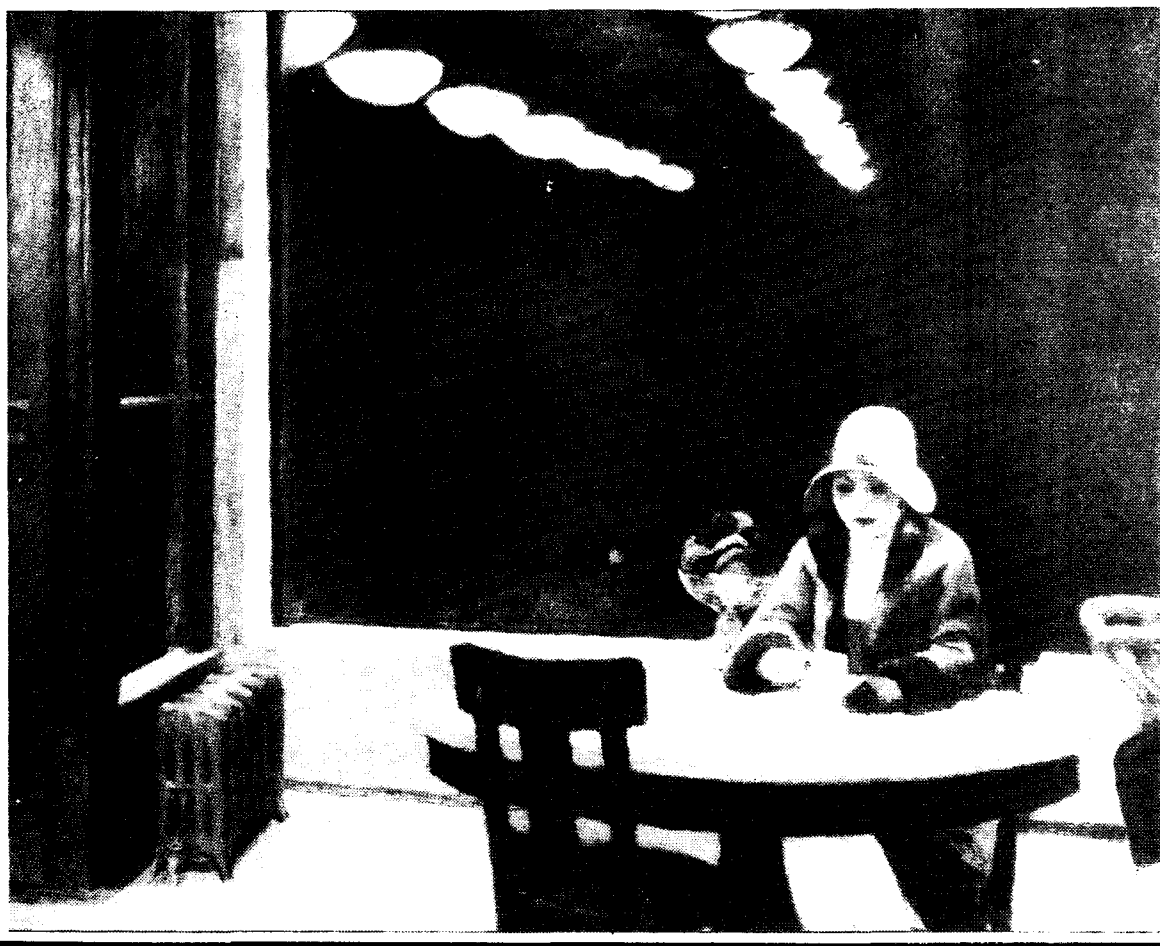
Both the Modernists (with their insistence that only new styles can be of value in painting) and their opponents (with their vague appeals to "modern life," or the need faithfully to record appearances) are missing the point about Hopper's best work. Indeed, Hopper reminds me strongly of Mark Rothko, who was perhaps the best of America's abstract painters. Stylistically, of course, they have no-

thing in common. Yet the area of experience that Rothko expressed through his chosen pictorial conventions was peculiarly close to Hopper's. Rothko, at first a figure painter, turned to wholly abstract works of glowing color fields through which he chronicled his struggle against depression, alienation and despair.

Indeed, Hopper's work seems to follow a similar, though less dramatically extreme, development. The most successful of his later interiors are those of the walls of empty rooms. It is as if Hopper no longer wished the figures of others, in the world, to impinge upon that expressive space that he was trying to construct in his pictures. ■

*Peter Fuller is an English writer on the arts.*

*Loneliness is a strong theme in Edward Hopper's AUTOMAT.*



## EXHIBITS

# Cornell's innocent daydreams

By David Moberg

On the surface, there would seem to be little that Edward Hopper and Joseph Cornell have in common, except that they were American artists of this century whose works have just been given large New York showings. Cornell worked for nearly four decades, until his death in 1972, constructing little boxes full of mystery and whimsy, repeatedly drawing on a number of hermetic themes and images—the Medicis, clay pipes, metal rings, small balls, old maps, cosmic hotels, parrots or storage bottles, to name a few. Here was no effort at realism, no reflection of urban emotional landscapes, no flat depiction of a cold, architectural world.

But both Cornell and Hopper share a quality that also marks them as American artists in a distinctive way, even though both were very influenced by the French—impressionists for Hopper and Duchamp and some of the surrealists for Cornell (although he rejected, quite rightly, the usual pattern of lumping him with the surrealists). Both men

reflect a longing for a lost innocence that was part of at least the American myth if not the American past. Both reacted, in quite different ways, to a fragmentation of social life that appeared to be accelerating. But whereas Hopper seems to suggest that the innocence lay in the undisturbed nature of new England or the small town, Cornell tries to capture it in a perpetuation of the world of the child's imagination. Each is, in a way, a very psychological artist. For all of his realism, Hopper claimed to be primarily reflecting his own psyche. The feeling tone may be Hopper's projection on his canvas, but for Cornell, it is much more as if we have been invited into his daydreams.

The contrast with the surrealists and their emphasis on dreams is interesting. Cornell avoided the nightmares, the lurking violence, the forbidding sensuality and the dark side of humanity revealed in so much European surrealism. As Dawn Ades notes in the catalog to the Museum of Modern Art exhibit, the largest presentation ever of Cornell's work, the Europeans confronted in the '30s a world threatened by fascism. Cornell looked instead to the "white

*Continued on page 26*



*Joseph Cornell's MEDICI SLOT MACHINE.*



## ARTS

# Right axes popular arts

By Josh Martin

NEW YORK

President Reagan's advisors have proposed cutting \$85 million, or 50 percent of arts funding from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)—the nation's largest single source of arts funding.

If the NEA is terminated, it will not be the result of traditional Republican policies. Since the National Endowment was created 15 years ago, the arts have received more support from Republican administrations than Democratic ones. Federal funding for NEA grew from \$4 million to \$7 million under Johnson, then soared to \$100 million during the Nixon-Ford years. Last year, the NEA budget stood at \$150 million—divided among 6,000 projects (culled from 25,000 applications).

The Reagan administration is apt to base its arts policies on proposals contained in the "Mandate for Leadership," a report by the Heritage Foundation, an influential conservative think tank. The report proposes that the NEA redirect its activities along more conservative lines, narrowing its scope to "serious" culture and "high" art, dismantling much of the federal arts bureaucracy, and discontinuing the policy of encouraging community and folk art around the nation.

Samuel Lipman, one of the report's authors and music critic for *Commentary*, does not recommend terminating the NEA. "I think there is a role for government in high culture," he said. "The most interesting parts of high culture aren't commercially viable." What is high culture? Lipman himself had no answer, but he said the NEA ought to have "a working definition of high art."

Because the NEA is the largest single source of arts funding, any attempt to define "art" will have great impact on the arts community. John Kennedy opposed expanded government funding for the arts because he felt it would eventually limit freedom of expression—certain art forms would be promoted at the expense of others. Indeed, the outcome of the current debate between "populists" and "elitists" over the NEA will determine where and what art gets funded. The populist view is to

allocate funds on the basis of population and geography. The elitist view is to fund only existing talent of proven quality.

Congressman Sidney Yates (D-Ill.), who secures NEA funding on the House Appropriations Committee, argues that Congress wants "elitism" plus populism in NEA programs. "We want quality in the arts, and we want the arts to be represented throughout the country."

Livingston Biddle, the Carter-

of 30 such bills passed). More importantly the caucus—whose members include Reps. S. William Green, Shirley Chisholm, Richard Ottinger and Steven Solar—intends to protect existing arts funding levels. "Arts agencies didn't fare well under Reagan in California," said a caucus source. "We want to make sure this doesn't happen on a federal level."

As governor of California, Reagan was often at odds with



appointed chairman of the NEA, views his agency as a "catalyst" creating a national interest in the arts. Despite Republican complaints that his was a political appointment, Biddle says he has a "good relationship" with Reagan administration officials. These good feelings may not last long. Although Biddle's term of office lasts until October, the current budget year ends in July and he could find himself the chairman of a non-existent agency.

Traditional bipartisan support for the arts in Congress was battered by last fall's elections. Gone are such powerful arts patrons as Jacob Javits, Frank Thompson and John Brademas (whose influence in the House earned him the sobriquet "Mr. Arts"). The new Congress has many unknowns who may not have any concern for arts programs.

In the wake of reports that the NEA was on Stockman's hit list, representatives from New York and other states formed a Congressional Arts Caucus in January. Brooklyn Rep. Fred Richmond said the purpose of the caucus was to secure passage of more arts-oriented legislation (in the last session, only two out

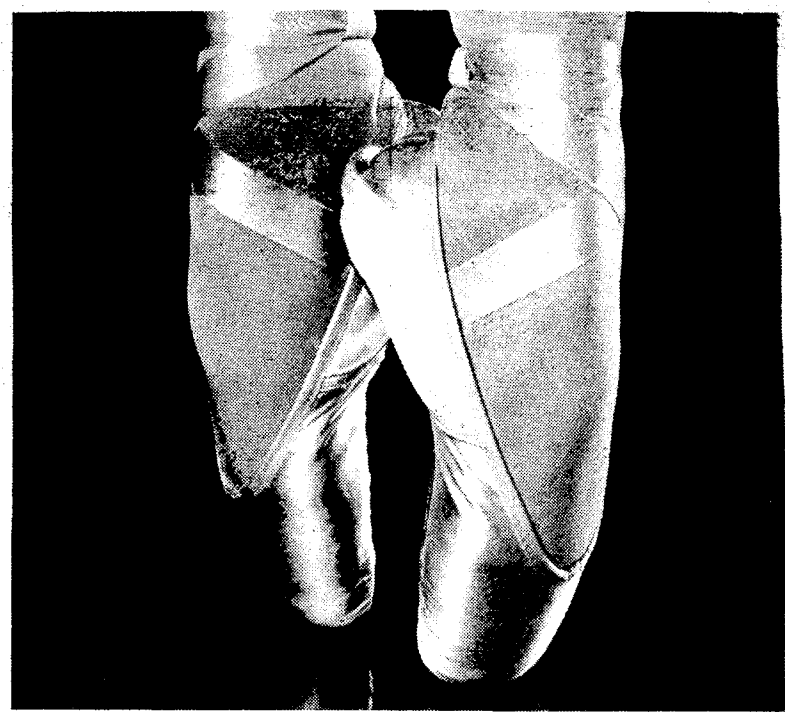
the state Arts Commission. "He paid lip service, but there was little action," said Steve Goldsmith, a former official with the state agency. "In Washington, he'll follow straight-line Republican politics. They'll shift the NEA from grass-roots art to 'big money' things like symphonies. This is what he did as governor."

"Reagan backs 'standards of excellence' in arts," Goldsmith added. "What that means is reduced support for community and folk art." It also means that Reagan appointees to the NEA council will direct more attention to individual applications than to developing general policy.

Reagan's most detailed statement on the arts to date is a questionnaire that he answered early in 1980 for the magazine *American Art*. "Artistic creativity," he wrote, "cannot be bought, but it can be encouraged and should be, without domination by any governmental body. Overall, the arts should concentrate on what they do best and leave the broader social problems to others, lest standards of excellence be lowered."

Reagan's answers had few kind words for the National Endowment. He pledged to end the agency's "politicization" under Carter, and said his appointees to the NEA council would be selected "on the basis of their artistic skills rather than their political connections." Most of his aides are indifferent to art. Power in this area is likely to be wielded by David Stockman (controlling the purse at OMB), Peter McCoy (former head of Sotheby Parke-Bernet Los Angeles, now head of the Office of the First Lady), Robert S. Carter (a former trustee of the Kennedy Performing Arts Center in Washington, and the man who headed the arts policy transition team), and Mrs. Reagan.

The new First Lady has been favorably compared to Jacqueline Kennedy. The comparison was strengthened by her appearance at the inauguration wearing a pill-box-like hat. Nancy Reagan's tastes are opulent. She



tion of funds. Over the past decade, liberal NEA policies have reduced the portion of funds allocated to "established" arts institutions in favor of more regional and experimental programs. New York's portion has declined 50 percent. The Reagan administration may reverse this trend.

But no one's willing to write off the National Endowment. Among other things, it has promoted local and private arts funding. National figures show states' arts funding grew from \$4 million in 1966 to over \$100 million last year. Businesses have increased arts funding from \$22 million to over \$400 million.

You don't have to be a culture lover to support government arts funding. Many congressmen enjoy the prestige that is linked to NEA-sponsored programs, seeing them as a constituency service that yields publicity and votes. The president does not want to alienate senators and congressmen whose votes he needs on other legislation. Reagan, says one insider, "will work within the existing structure to alter it," with standards of excellence for all.

In view of past support from Republican legislators, NEA funding levels may be preserved, although the money would be allocated quite differently.

Josh Martin, a New York writer, reports on arts and the economy.

## Money for high art

The New Right has made its position on the National Endowment for the Arts known through the Heritage Foundation's report, "Mandate for Leadership." The four-part chapter on the NEA argues that the agency has used art as a means to realize political and social goals, sacrificing quality while creating a money-hungry bureaucracy.

According to the report, "The arts are asked to be everything to everybody, at one and the same time to remedy the perceived ills of society, employ all who want to be artists and fill the leisure hours of an entire population."

The NEA has "a flawed conception of art," in which "art is increasingly seen as mere entertainment, a diversion whose importance and the amount of money it receives is measured by the number of people who can be found to make up its audience."

"Grants are scattered broadside to the serious and the trivial alike, apparently on the principle that a penny bet on every number will somehow in the end produce

sizeable winnings. The best of these projects do no more than fossilize the popular culture of the past, and the worst are nothing more than high-flown welfare and unemployment schemes."

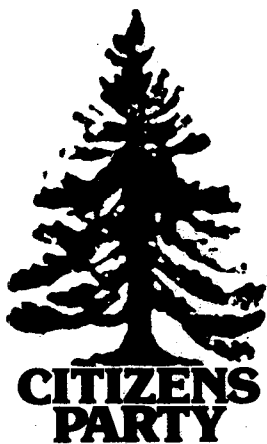
In the future, the "Mandate for Leadership" recommends: "The arts that the NEA funds must support belong primarily to the area of high culture. Such culture is more than mere entertainment, and is concerned with permanent values beyond current tastes and wide appeal. To blur the distinction between the serious and the popular is to destroy both the integrity of great art and compromise the authenticity of popular culture itself."

"The NEA must accept the sad fact that simply creating art for audiences does not always result in creating audiences for art. It must finally acknowledge that the enduring audience for art is largely self-selecting—a relatively small public marked by the willingness to make sacrifices of other pleasures for the sake of artistic experience."

—Josh Martin

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## FILM

# Nine to Five slapstick makes a point

By Anita Alverio

Four years ago, IPC Films producer Jane Fonda indicated an interest in documenting the condition of women office workers at a time when clericals were speaking publicly about organizing. Sometime later, with director Colin Higgins, Fonda spent about 10 hours with the Cleveland chapter of Working Women, the National Association for Office Workers. The resulting tapes with clericals talking about jobs, treatment as office workers and fantasies about revenge convinced Bruce Gilbert, also an IPC producer, that a film was possible. Those tapes, together with a documentary prepared for public television by *Ms.* magazine and WNET-TV (New York) and aired on "Women Alive," formed the basis for 20th Century Fox's comedy *Nine to Five*.

Starring Lily Tomlin, Jane Fonda and Dolly Parton, *Nine to Five* claims to observe a typical office with an oppressive boss, played by Dabney Coleman. The office workers—manager Tomlin, private secretary Parton and typist Fonda—decide to take over the office and make changes after an evening of fantasizing revenge. Their fantasies become reality and, after kidnapping the boss to prevent their own arrest, the three institute easy, perfect solutions to the problems of every office.

While critics alternately praise and pan the comedy, the film has done very well at the box office. *In These Times* asked Working Women, the organization that inspired the film, for their assessment of *Nine to Five*.

"We're quite pleased," said publicist Janice Blood from the Boston chapter. "We believed that the best tactic was to make a movie that didn't focus on any individual issue clericals face, but created a heightened awareness of the problems for a general audience. This movie does just that."

The script is not a documentary or transcript of the 1977-78 sessions with Cleveland clericals. However, Blood said that Tomlin's fantasies of poisoning her boss' coffee and pushing him out the window were taken from real descriptions.

Blood explained that IPC Films sent Cleveland Working Women a first draft of the screenplay for comment, and that the movie incorporated many of the members' suggestions.

"Working Women hopes that aside from having a good time, women will gain an understanding that they are not alone," Blood said. "Change in the office isn't just a dream. Women do fantasize about getting even. Working Women shows how to do it constructively."

Does this movie help that? No, say critics, only the three stars work together—everyone else benefits from the changes without participation. The movie's heroes, clericals, responded differently.

"It's a joyful movie," remarked a title examiner. "It portrays a lot of real problems, but unfortunately doesn't come up with practical solutions."

Nancy Isenberg, who has risen from sales secretary to managing three men at Dollar Rent-

a-Car, said that as a secretary she felt no changes were possible without risking her job. "The movie is a riot," Isenberg said. "It's worth the price of a ticket just to see that you're not the only one being treated like that and thinking like that."

"I identified with the petty stuff secretaries are asked to do," said Elaine Smith, who was a secretary at the University of Pittsburgh for five years until she was hired as an organizer for Working Women. "Like when Tomlin or Parton were told to get the boss' coffee and had to drop all their work, no matter how important, to make it. Or

*In NINE TO FIVE Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin and Dolly Parton play clerical workers drawn in part from women in Cleveland.*

when they did all the boss' work, signing letters and taking responsibility, yet getting no recognition, pay or respect. It happens all the time."

## Comedy best tactic.

Betty Arenth, director of Pittsburgh Working Women and a former office clerical, believes that the roles were somewhat caricatured, particularly that of the boss. But she said that stereotyping the boss was the only way to communicate the attitudes and continual put-downs that clericals must put up with.

"*Nine to Five* is typical of the creative use of slapstick to make a social point," Arenth said. "It's a tactic Working Women uses quite frequently." She described Working Women's "Pet-tiest Office Procedure Award,"

which last August was publicly presented to the vice-president of a company who demanded, among other things, that his clericals return his wife's worn pantyhose to a store.

"Comedy and humor are our best tactics," Arenth said. "We get tremendous release from frustration by laughing at our situation. Then we have the energy to do something about it."

Working Women chapters around the U.S. are informally encouraging members and other clericals to see the film. In Baltimore, Seattle, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Atlanta, chapters leafleted theaters and spoke with local media about Working Women.

Some members of Working Women, however, are critical of 20th Century Fox's refusal to

ally itself with the organization publicly.

"We are listed on the credits," Arenth of Pittsburgh said, "but only after the gaffers. We received 51 pounds of promotion buttons but 20th Century says this is a comedy, not a political organizing film."

However, Fonda, along with Tomlin and Parton, appeared at a \$125-a-plate premiere benefit on Dec. 14 in New York City for Working Women. Fonda also appeared at opening benefits in Cleveland and Los Angeles.

"*Nine to Five* is encouraging a lot of interest in our organization," publicist Blood claims, "and it's a big chance for us."

Anita Alverio is a freelance writer and works with the Community Health Advocacy Network in Pittsburgh.



## MUSIC

## Blues gets its start on Maxwell Street

By David Whiteis

If there's one area in Chicago that deserves to be called a "birthplace of the blues," it's probably Maxwell Street. Initiated as an open-air market by Jewish immigrants around the turn of the century, it was already a thriving street-music scene by the '20s, and by 1945, when Delta guitarist Honeyboy Edwards made his way to Chicago from the Deep South with a hard-blowing, hard-living harmonica player named Little Walter who would soon join Muddy Waters and revolutionize American popular music, it was accepted as the place to play if you wanted to pick up some extra money and get your name out before you took on the clubs of the South Side.

Muddy Waters got his start in Chicago there; so did Elmore James and Robert Nighthawk. Harmonica genius Big Walter Horton's erratic career has always found him relying on "Jewtown" to pull in a few extra bucks when things got slow; ditto for Floyd Jones, Homesick James and Playboy Venson, who is one of the few people actually still living in the area and has the dubious distinction of probably having played behind more famous people—who then went on and left him behind—than any other musician on Maxwell.

To properly capture the atmosphere of the area, you'd need to import the greasy smoke of half a dozen Polish sausage and pork chop stands, the blistering heat of Chicago's 90-degree summer Sunday mornings, and a panorama of sounds—bells, horns, children screaming, hustlers splicing, electric guitars and cheap-microphoned voices wailing the blues, bottles breaking—and smells—food, stagnant water,



Blues band stakes out a sidewalk on Maxwell Street.

er, wine, beer, piss, human sweat, dust and mud—and throw in a couple of thousand milling bodies for good measure. You'd need at least two sullen-looking street dudes pulling people over to sell them a watch or a gold chain; a singing wino reclined in an old wheelbarrow, smiling like a child on Christmas; plus stands, tables, and booths with merchants selling everything, and I mean everything, from clothes to nails and screws to God-awful ornate lighting fixtures that look like they were designed by Liberace on acid, and an entire line of objects, knickknacks, and just plain things, some that seem to have no use or purpose but to sit there and look like they must have been made for something; I swear that people buy some of this stuff just to figure out what it is!

You'd also need, not incidentally, garbage-strewn vacant lots, crumbling tenement buildings, and some of Chicago's very poorest black residents, the few people who still live near Maxwell Street in the wake of urban removal and deterioration. For the people who live around Maxwell, Sunday is a weekly escape from utter hopelessness into a crazy kind of carnival, surrealistic in its contrast to the barren despair that pervades the area during the week.

Sandra Lieb, Linda Williams and Raul Zaritsky—faculty

members at nearby Circle Campus (University of Illinois)—have attempted to capture some of this on film in their movie *Maxwell Street Blues*, which premiered at Chicago's Facets Multimedia Center on Jan. 17. Since they didn't have access to the above-mentioned audio-visual aids, they intelligently decided to give a brief overview and history of Maxwell and then zero in on a couple of musicians—Blind Jim Brewer and the late Arvella Grey, as well as Brewer's long-time partner Carrie Robertson—for an in-depth look at some of the personalities who have made Maxwell Street come alive over the years.

The portraits of Brewer, Grey and Robertson are the most effective parts of the movie. One simply can't capture the ambience of Maxwell in a half-hour of film, at least not without concentrating on the weekly transition from desert to celebration, and then back again to desolation, all in the 24 hours from late Saturday evening to 4:00 or 5:00 p.m. Sunday afternoon.

Williams and Zaritsky (Lieb left for other projects soon after the filming for this one began) don't really attempt that. We're given a few perfunctory shots of vendors setting up, Playboy Venson getting his drums together, and a voice-over by businessman Morrie Magee, ex-

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# Party

Continued from page 6

Alternatives to provide the kind of policy scholarship for left Democrats that the American Enterprise Institute provided for the Republican right. Mark Green is proposing a new think tank. And Keith Haller, an aide to Rep. Michael Barnes, along with Barnes, former Hubert Humphrey and McGovern aide Ted Van Dyk and several veterans of the Kennedy and Carter campaigns, is proposing the re-establishment of the Democratic Forum.

The Democratic Forum started in 1973. It published a magazine and held conferences with the purpose of developing new ideas for the Democrats. It disbanded after Carter's election. It was a centrist group, opposed to the CDM's anti-detente policies, but reluctant to endorse the kind of full-employment planning that was then popular on the Democratic left. From all indications, it will occupy a similar place in the current efforts to rebuild the party.

Haller himself talks about getting beyond a "New Deal" and "special interest" approach and placing more power in the hands of local and state governments. He was critical of the Kennedy campaign: "On the one hand, you love to hear a person espouse the views you've heard for so long," he said. "But on the other hand, it only creates a deeper quagmire. It was very much a campaign of the early '60s. He was playing up to the special interests, which would have made it difficult for him to govern."

Kennedy's political aide, Carl Wagner, is more cautious about affirming the need for new ideas, seeing it as another call to move right. "I don't know what happens to the working-class and black voters if the Democrats move toward becoming a moderate or conservative party," he said. Wagner didn't see so much a need for new ideas as the need for what he called a "compelling idea."

"Democratic Party organization will be greatly facilitated when the party is able to set forward a compelling idea," Wagner said. He cited the civil rights and trade union causes as past examples of compelling ideas.

Wagner, Craver and other Democrats do not seem terribly interested in economic planning as an alternative to stagflation. And on defense, many of them

acknowledge a change of heart. "The Afghan invasion moved liberals to the center," Wagner said.

"The position the left has taken on military questions has got to change," Lee Webb said. "The left's position has been: don't build it, and if you build it, don't deploy it. The left has no sense of military strategy. People think the military is important. If you're running for Congress, one's position on military questions can no longer be we have to cut the military budget."

While there is general agreement about the need for new ideas, the Democrats often seem to mean, in Kamber's words, new ways of "packaging" old ideas. One Citizen Action leader said that what the Democrats needed was a "broad platform that has some public relations pizzazz put in it." While it would be foolish to deny the need for new means of communicating ideas, these Democrats seem to deny that there is a basic problem of policy and not merely one of politics.

Craver takes the opposite tack, but it comes out the same. "The cutting issue now is the willingness to speak out on a new idea," he said. "The rightness of the idea isn't important."

There is, in short, a vacuum here as well, one that must be filled if the Democrats are not to become a permanent minority party or even a third party in the 1980s.

## Cornell

Continued from page 23

"magic" of dreaming, the creation of theatrical little worlds of dancing lobsters and ineffable youngsters amidst the kinds of objects that a child might very well accumulate as talismans. These fetishes are more like teddy bears than the leather masks of the "black magic" surrealists. There is in Cornell the utopian quality—and, as everyone notes, he did spend most of his adult life with his mother and ailing brother on Utopia Parkway in the Bronx—of the New England transcendentalists. Indeed, Emily Dickinson was one of the figures he admired, although despite popular impressions Cornell was never as much the recluse as she.

Cornell combated fragmentation through his assemblages, combining objects that personally evoked a scene in New York, where he loved to wander among old shops, rummaging for resources, or a particular sentiment. Un-

like the surrealists, as Carter Ratcliff notes, Cornell did not reject memory as a burden; he tried to hold on to a lost past through the affinities established among his objects. They were bound up, like a small museum, like a stage, like a chest ready for a voyage of the imagination, like the storefront junk stores that pulled together disparate items. (It is another way in which Hopper and Cornell are curiously alike: both strongly convey a voyeuristic sense of peeping into closed spaces occupied by private experiences, and New York storefronts framed in their imagination or directly in their work the subjects they studied.)

Cornell's "toys for adults" represent a dimension of art as well as of adult life that can be snuffed out by an overly serious or heartless world. Certainly it is gone from Hopper's worlds. Cornell's reveries offer enchantment in a world that has no time for such fantasy, a world that has been disenchanting and made "realistic" at great cost. Cornell's limitation is, of course, his reluctance to confront directly that world which is not full of the romance of ballerinas and the magic of mirrors. Instead, he has left his maps and mementos of his dream voyages in search of a timeless, elusive and innocent beauty.

## Jews

Continued from page 21

gressive politics," observes Arthur Waskow, a Jewish mystic and one-time anti-Vietnam activist who was one of the pioneers of the havurah movement. "It is very exciting to see how much this movement has grown, and to sense this kind of energy and commitment, especially at a time when activism is supposed to be dead."

Despite this undeniable spirit of unity and shared vision, traditional Jews took umbrage with the unqualifiedly pro-abor-

tion, pro-gay and pro-feminist language of one "straw vote" proposal that was passed, and moderates objected to the pro-third world, anti-U.S. foreign policy slant of another. Actually, the final NJA platform is likely to be more middle of the road than these "sense of the assembly" votes would suggest, as the actual writing of the platform is being left to the 35-member executive committee, which was carefully selected to get a wide array of viewpoints and to represent all significant NJA constituencies.

Many at the conference spoke of the need to recreate the old Jewish alliance with "have not" groups like blacks and Hispanics, and yet clearly NJA will have to reach out to a wider spectrum, both politically and culturally, of the American Jewish community if it is to grow into an effective force. But, according to Rabbi Serotta, "We are aware that we do not now represent the majority opinion of the Jewish community, and our role is not to repeat what the Jewish establishment is saying. Authentic Jewish unity does not grow from forced unanimity, intolerance, or stifling of dissent, but from respect and understanding for diversity. We hope to espouse our positions strongly, bearing always in mind the love of the Jewish people and of Israel."

Whether NJA will take root and grow into a mass movement remains to be seen. But the birth of NJA is proof that the Jewish progressive dream that impelled the Yiddish-speaking socialists of New York's Lower East Side, the Hebrew-speaking kibbutzniks of early Israel and the liberal secular Jews of post World War II America lives on in the age of Reagan (and Begin). At the NJA conference the sense of Jews struggling as proud Jews for the rights of all people was inspiring. The sense of the conference was perfectly captured in the last line of the proposed platform: "We rejoice in our Jewishness and our humanity, and look forward to a shared future of devotion, struggle and love."

## DIRECTORY

The Directory is published to facilitate contact with organizations frequently referred to in the pages of *In These Times*. Each organization has paid a fee for its listing.

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1110 6th Street, NW, #300  
Washington, DC 20001

**The Citizens Party-National Office**  
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Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$20.00 for two insertions and \$10.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 40 words or less (additional words are 35¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of Bill Rehm.

### NEW YORK, NY

#### February 20-21

Perspectives on Labor: Films at the Brecht Auditorium. Charlie Chaplin's "Modern Times" will be shown at 7:00 and 9:30 p.m. at 151 W. 19th St. \$3.00. Call (212) 989-6820 for more information.

#### February 28

"Advancing the cause of union democracy." All-day conference discussions on the law and recent union events led by Joseph A. Yablonski, Clyde Summers, Burt Hall, H.W. Benson, Ken Paff of TDU, Frank Schonfeld, Margaret Hayden. Place: Workmen's Circle Center, 45 E. 33 St., Manhattan. Time: 9:00 a.m.-4:45 p.m. Registration: \$5 regular; \$2 low income; \$15 and up contributory. Send advance fee to sponsor: Association for Union Democracy, 215 Park Ave. South, NYC 10003.

### OAKLAND, CA

#### February 22

"The Left and the Challenge of the '80s" is the theme of a presentation and discussion by the Proletarian Unity League. Can Marxism rise to the challenge facing the Left? APUMEC Hall, 3256 E. 14th, Oakland, 7:00 p.m. \$2.00 donation.

### CHICAGO, IL

#### February 26

"Nuclear Power—Can We Afford It?" Speakers from the Illinois Office of Consumer Services, Illinois Public Action Council and Operation PUSH. Thursday at 7:00 p.m. at DePaul University, 25 E. Jackson. Sponsored by Citizens Against Nuclear Power. \$2.00. Call 786-9041 or 472-2492 for more information.

### NEVADA CITY, CA

#### May 22-25

The Western Socialist Social Science Conference, co-sponsored by the Red Feather Institute, invites workshop proposals on any aspect—theoretical, practical or cultural—of a socialist future. For more information, contact: Kreplin, Department of Sociology, University of Nevada, Reno, NV 89557.

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# Blues

Continued from page 25

plaining the Jewish outdoor market tradition. A brief musical history of Maxwell Street by Chicago record impresario Bob Koester follows, and from there on it's all the musicians.

The producers seem to have been slightly affected by a common Maxwell Street problem: there's so much going on that it's hard to focus on any one thing. Despite short interviews with Playboy Venson and Floyd Jones toward the beginning, which give entertaining and accurate glimpses of their personalities, a certain aimlessness pervades the first half hour or so. This may well be a very authentic feeling: Maxwell Street is a perfect spot to wander around with no particular place to go.

With Arvella Grey, Jim Brewer and Carrie Robertson, however, things come much more alive, and a sense of purpose emerges that is refreshing. The heart of Maxwell Street's vitality is a gut-level sense of optimism in the face of despair, the kind of celebration laced with a

freedom that comes from having nothing to lose. The area's faces and eyes tell stories of long, hard-fought lives and strength, and both Grey and Brewer—blind, itinerant musicians who laugh off their "handicap" and tell endless tales—perfectly exemplify this spirit. So does gospel singer Carrie Robertson, who has spent most of the last year in a nursing home but still makes it down on Sundays to sing her sanctified music and break into her patented dance in front of a run-down little brick shack at 14th and Halsted.

As a portrait of the Maxwell Street "scene," the film is not as successful. Williams and Zaritsky admit as much, saying that they chose to capture the stories and personalities of Grey, Brewer and Robertson to illustrate the history and spirit of the place. Certainly, some things are lacking: the best music down there these days is being played by Pat Rush and his family, who go through everything from blues to disco with a raw-edged intensity that makes up in enthusiasm what it might lack in polish. Especially impressive is Pat's daughter Kattie. She improves every time I hear her, and she's well on her way to becoming an accomplished vocal styl-

ist. But budget constrictions prevented them from getting on the film, though Pat gets in a few licks with Jones and Venson in the opening sequences.

The scene at the Facets screening was about as far from Maxwell Street as one could get. Carrie Robertson, looking quite frail, nonetheless summoned the strength to show off a few of her famous dance maneuvers, and the folks whooped and applauded with appropriate enthusiasm. Still, I felt that there was a condescension in the air almost as thick as the smoke from Playboy Venson's cigar; here was an opportunity to watch the Negroes and their quaint ways without getting involved in anyone's stories or lives.

Maxwell Street affords no such luxury. Tourists come and go, but nobody hangs out there on a regular basis without gaining a genuine affection and concern for the area and its residents.

That's the one aspect of Maxwell Street that sets it apart from almost every other popular blues spot in the city—the ones frequented largely by whites, at any rate—and it's one thing that the character portraits in Williams and Zaritsky's movie illustrate

## PEOPLE'S SOLUTIONS

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better than any other. The musicians and residents of Maxwell Street aren't setting up to play the blues once a week for the white kids or "maintain a tradition" in any kind of self-conscious way; they're living their lives.

Zaritsky and Williams have captured a slice of a few of those lives on film, and for this we can be grateful. Arvella Grey, especially, has been virtually ignored by musicologists, and it's extremely important that he's finally been properly recognized. He may well have been the last living authentic "songster," a pre-blues style of black singer who included older musical forms such as field hollers and

work songs in his repertoire, carrying on a vocal tradition extending back before the Civil War.

There's nothing quaint about hard times or hard lives, and there's nothing romantic about poverty. There is, however, much to be admired and learned from people who've taken these lives and fashioned something strong—even joyful—from a lifetime of fighting. This, in the end, is the true value of Maxwell Street. It's also the most important lesson to be learned from Linda Williams and Raul Zaritsky's movie.

David White is a freelance writer and musician.

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### PUBLICATIONS

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FEBRUARY, JEWISH CURRENTS; "The New Jewish Agenda," Editorial, and article by Larry Bush. Karen Sacks, "Racist Eugenics Dissected," Max Rosenfeld, "USSR Exports Anti-Semitic Novel," Joseph Dorinson, "Lenny Bruce-Jewish Humorist." Single copy \$1. Subscription \$10. USA. Jewish Currents, Dept. T, 22 East 17 St., NYC 10003. New pamphlet, "Soviet Jewish Situation," Gordon, Harap, Magill, Hesnick, Schappes \$1.

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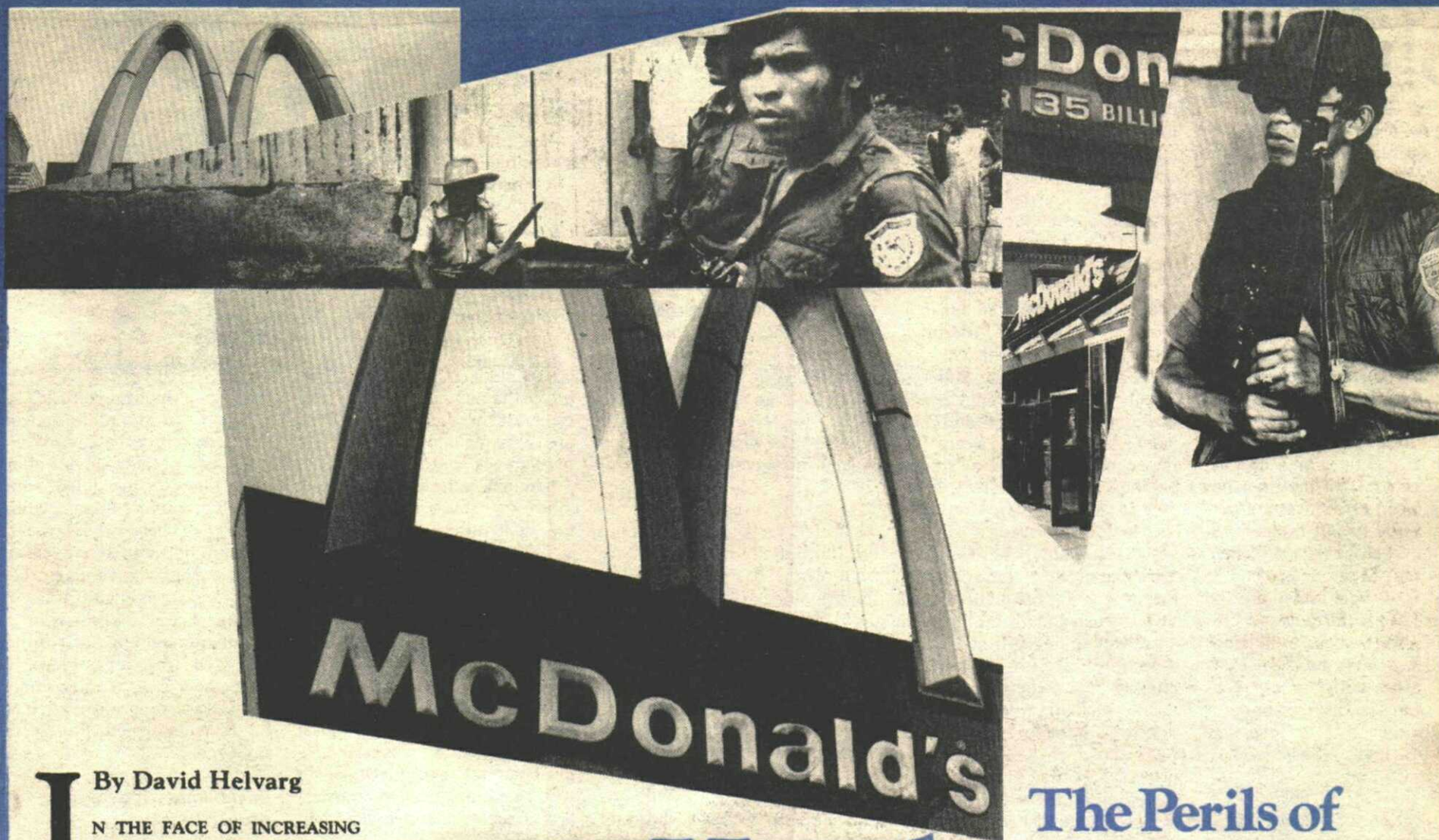
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By David Helvarg

**I**N THE FACE OF INCREASING violence and civil war, there's one Salvadorean institution that's not about to get the shakes or fry out, although it might deserve a break today. Under the golden arches of the San Salvador McDonalds all is not Big Macs and apple pies. "It's hard to operate in the Central American market these days," admits the manager of one of the two remaining Big Mac franchises in El Salvador (the third was burned down by members of the FPL, the Popular Liberation Forces, last November). "The leftists and students see us as a symbol of U.S. imperialism; protective national tariffs and political unrest make it difficult to do purchasing on a regional basis; and problems with local methods of food processing make it hard to meet the standards set by headquarters back in Oak Brook, Ill."

There are 15 McDonalds hamburger restaurants in Central America at the moment, two in Guatemala, two in El Salvador, one in Nicaragua, six in Costa Rica (the most "developed" of the Central American nations) and four in Panama. There was also one in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, but McDonalds inspectors de-certified it two years ago for "lack of excellence."

While operating under strict orders not to say anything to the press, one McManager agreed to talk anonymously with *In These Times* after this reporter commented on how similar in taste the local Macs and fries were to the ones back home. "We use all local materials," he said with pride. "The only things we get from the states are our paper products and ice cream sauces. Our spices, ketchup and mustard we buy locally from McCormick (another U.S.-based multinational specializing in teas and spices). Our meat is a problem because of different *matadero* (slaughterhouse) methods and also because of the heavy amount of insecticide sprayed by farmers around here."

"It would be nice to pool our purchases on a regional basis and thus gain some control over the food production process like in the States," he went on. "Unfortunately, with protective tariffs and the unstable political situation here now, I just don't think that's possible. The Nicaraguan franchise, for example, has been having a lot of problems since the revolution took over last year—labor prob-

lems and this sort of thing. We used to get our fish from Nicaragua; now we're going to start purchasing it from Miami. I'm not sure exactly why that is. It's something we'll be discussing in Chicago at our annual fish filet conference."

With over \$1 billion in sales in 1980 from 3,500 burger stands scattered around the U.S. and the "free world," the McDonalds Corporation is not above playing politics. Ray Kroc, its 79-year-old chairman of the board, is something of a right-wing Horatio Alger type. A traveling salesman and itinerant piano player until the age of 52, Kroc got the idea for assembly-line fast food service from the McDonald brothers, a pair of San Bernadino restaurateurs who in the late '50s were providing quick snacks to post-war southern California suburban aerospace workers at a time when the U.S. was growing fat on atomic war production and grain-fed red meat.

After buying out the McDonald brothers and exiling them to a New Hampshire franchise, Kroc stand-

ardized the company's products, adding sugar to the buns and sauce and automating the deep-fat fryers. By the early '70s McDonalds had outstripped most of the competition, including Burger King (owned by the Ralston-Purina cattle-feed conglomerate).

Kroc was a big supporter of Nixon's administration and Nixon was a big supporter of what came to be known as the "McDonalds rider," the minimum wage law that would have established "the subminimum wage for teenagers." Nixon also exempted McDonalds' alleged quarter pounder from price controls.

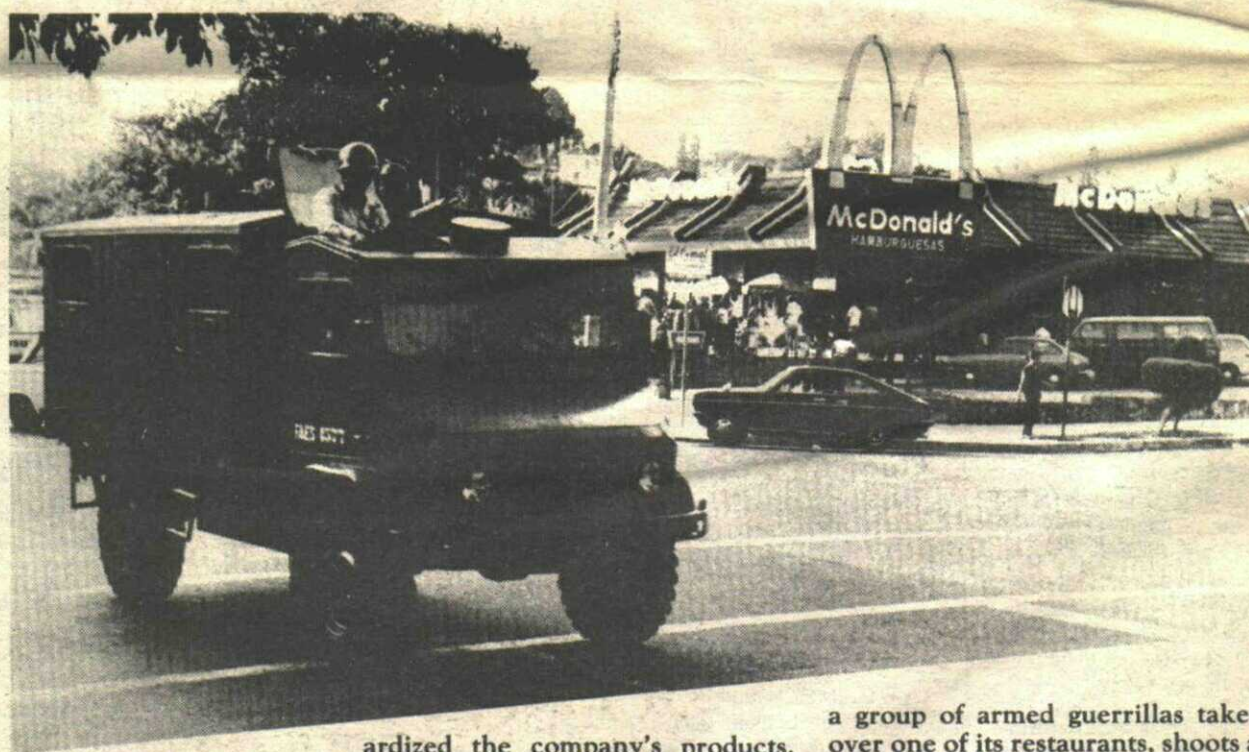
In the early '70s, as the domestic market reached saturation point, McDonalds started expanding overseas, first to Japan in 1971 (despite a company analysis that reported the Japanese stomach was "50 years behind that of its American counterpart") and later to Hong Kong, Germany, France and the Third World. The Third World presented the company and its flag-waving chairman with new problems. For example, how does the parent company respond when

a group of armed guerrillas takes over one of its restaurants, shoots a security guard, sets off four bombs and burns it to the ground? "They phoned us and said, 'You guys have it rough down there,'" said the Salvadorean manager with a slightly ironic smile. "We didn't have anyone from the States drop in after that until a couple of inspectors showed up in February."

And why would leftist guerrillas take time out from their busy schedule trying to overthrow the government to bomb a McDonalds? "I don't know why they did it really. Maybe it's like in Mexico, you know. We're having a real hard time getting our franchise set up there. The Mexicans have this thing, this nationalism, you know. I really don't understand it."

Outside in the parking lot, two little McBeggars wandered among the armored Cherokee Jeeps, asking the hamburger restaurant's wealthy clientele for a hand-out. ■ **David Helvarg covers Central America for IN THESE TIMES.**

PHOTOS (L. to R. top to bottom) Steve Kagan, Bob Haywood, Steve Kagan, Bob Haywood, Steve Kagan, Stuart Zitin.



## The Perils of Hamburger Diplomacy